# THE VIṢṆU PURĀṆA

## (Social Economic & Religious Aspects)

Thakur Harendra Dayal

THE VIṢṆU PURĀṆA

# THE VISNU PURANA



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# Preface

Earlier history was taken as the subject which dealt with the exploits of the kings and their achievements in the domain of administration. Historians used to confine their attention entirely to the political history of a nation, the vicissitudes of its ruling princes, the struggle of armed forces, but failed to take into account the cultural and social history which constitute an essential part of nation's history in true sense of term. History cannot be regarded as complete without the study of social, economic and cultural life of the people. History should record the story of the people and their life, thought and culture. That is way, the study of the social, economic and cultural aspects of the Purāṇa—the ancient, sacred and secular literature of Hindus after the Vedas—during the period under review has been taken up.

The Purāṇas are held next in importance to the Vedas by the Hindus and the historians, as it has a very significant place in the sacred and secular literature of Hindus. Through the Purāṇas one can penetrate into the treasure world of Indian philosophy, religion and all other aspects of Hinduism. Like the Vedas the Purāṇas also is the repository of ancient Indian culture and civilization.

According to the traditional view there are eighteen *Maha-Purāṇas* and eighteen *Upa-Purāṇas*. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is regarded as one of the eighteen Maha-Purāṇas. I have tried to show in my present work that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* continued to be transmitted orally for a pretty long time. The Purāṇa was not written for any particular class or caste but for all. Our Purāṇa like other Brahmanical texts, has been written in Sanskrit with a view of preserving the sanctity of the Brahmanical religion. An attempt has been made in this work to bring out the sources on which the main contents of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* are based though only tentatively.

In my present work I have mainly confined myself to the study of the social, economic and religious aspects of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and have excluded other things from the purview of my investigation. I have added an Appendix, too, which gives the names of the rivers, the mountains, tribes, towns and countries of Bharatavarsa, as found in our purāṇa. This Appendix should be considered very useful for locating the place of the compilation of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.*

No amount of words can adequately express my deep sense of gratitude that I owe to my esteemed Supervisor, Professor R.K. Chowdhary, Reader, Post-Graduate Department of History, Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur, whose constant guidance, able supervision, exacting standard of scholarship and sympathetic encouragement made it possible for me to give the work the present form. I also express my deep sense of gratitude and heart-felt thanks to my reverend teacher Dr. B.P. Sinha, University Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University, Patna, and Dr. Upendra Thakur, University Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian and Asian Studies, Magadh University, Bodhgaya. My grateful thanks and gratitude are also due to Dr. K.S. Karmashil, Head of the Department of Political Science and Dr. A. Kumar, Head of the Department of History and A.I.H & Cultural—both of the G.D. College, Begusarai. I am also thankfnl to Shree Kant, a well-known photographer of I.O.C. Refinery, for helping me in preparing drawings and photographs included in this work.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the constant encouragement and inspiration which I received from my uncle, Sri Thakur A.D. Sinha, Advocate, Patna High Court, whose saintly life of self-sacrifice will always serve as a guiding star to me.

In the end, I must place on record my heartiest thanks to all those great scholars whose writings I have thoroughly and intensively utilised in preparing this work.

*Thakur Harendra Dayal*

# Abbreviations

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| *ABORI* | : *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute,* Poona. |
| *AEV* | : *Aspects of Early Vaiṣṇavism* by Gonda. |
| *Agni.* | : *Agni Purāṇa.* |
| *AIA* | : *Art of India and Asia* by Campbell. |
| *AIE* | : *Ancient Indian Education* by R.K. Mookherjee. |
| *AIHT* | : *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* by Pargiter. |
| *AIN* | : *Ancient Indian Numismatics* by Bhandarkar, D.R. |
| *AIU* | : *Age of Imperial Unity* ed. Majumdar, R.C. |
| *Ait. Br.* | : *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.* |
| *AJP* | : *American Journal of Philology.* |
| *Amar* | : *Amarkoṣa.* |
| *Angirasa* | : *Angirasa Smṛiti.* |
| *Ang. Nik.* | : *Aṅguttara Nikāya.* |
| *Anss.* | : Ānandāśarma Sanskrit series. |
| *AOR* | : *Annals of Oriental Research,* Madras University. |
| *Āp. Dh. S.* | : *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra.* |
| *Āp. Gr. S.* | : *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra.* |
| App. | : Appendix or Appendices as the case may be. |
| *APS* | : *Agni Purāṇa A study*—Gyani. |
| *Āp. Śr. Sū.* | : *Āpastamba Śrautasūtra.* |
| *Arth.* | : *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya. |
| *ASB* | : *Asiatic Society of Bengal.* |
| *ASIAR* | : *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report.* |

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| *ASJCV* | : *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume.* |
| *Aṣṭā.* | : *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini. |
| *Āśv. Gṛ. S.* | : *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra.* |
| *ASVOI* | : *Annals of Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Institute,* Tirupati. |
| *ASWI* | : *Archaeological Survey of Western India.* |
| *Atri.* | : *Atri Smṛti.* |
| *AUS* | : *Allahabad University Studies.* |
| *AV* | : *Atharva Veda.* |
| *BAG* | : *The Buddhist Art of Gandhara* by Marshall. |
| *BAI* | : *The Buddhist Art in India* by Grunwedel. |
| *Baudh. Dh. S.* | : *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra.* |
| *Baudh. Gṛ. S.* | : *Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra.* |
| *BBA* | : *The Beginning of Buddhist Art* by Foucher. |
| *BBD* | : *Bharatiya Kala Ko Bihar Ki Dena* by Sinha, B.P. |
| *BCLC* | : *B.C. Law Commemoration Volume.* |
| *BDCRI* | : *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute,* Poona. |
| *Bhāg.* | : *Bhāgavata Purāṇa.* |
| *Bhār. Gṛ. S.* | : *Bhārdvāja Gṛhyasūtra.* |
| *Bhaviṣ.* | : *Bhaviṣyat Purāṇa.* |
| *BI* | : *Buddhist India* by Davids. |
| *BISMQ* | : *Bharat Itihas Samsodhak Mandal Quarterly.* |
| *BORI* | : *Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.* |
| *Bnḍ.* | : *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa.* |
| *Brahma* | : *Brahma Purāṇa.* |
| *Brahmavai* | : *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa.* |
| *Bṛ. Up.* | : *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* |
| *Bṛhat Saṁ.* | : *Bṛhat Saṁhitā of Varāhamihira.* |
| *BV* | : *Bharatiya Vidya.* |
| *CA* | : *Classical Age* by Majumdar, R.C. |

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| *CAI* | : *Coins of Ancient India.* |
| *Cat. Mat. Mus.* | : *Catalogue of the Archaeological Museum at Mathura* by Vogel. |
| *CBMA* | : *A Catalogue of the Brahmanical Images in Mathura Art by Agrawala.* |
| *CCAI* | : *Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India.* |
| *C. Dic.* | : *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography History and Literature* by Dowson. |
| cf | : Compare from. |
| *CGCBH* | : *Catalogue of the Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana Hoard* by Altekar. |
| Ch/Chs | : Chapter/Chapters. |
| *Chh. Up.* | : *Chhāndogya Upaniṣad.* |
| *CHI* | : *Cambridge History of India.* |
| *Ch. V.* | : *Chulla Vagga.* |
| *CHVP.* | : *Cultural History from the Vāyu Purāṇa* by Patil. |
| *CII* | : *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.* |
| Comm. | : Commentary or Commentator (as the case may be). |
| *Comp. HI* | : *Comprehensive History of India.* |
| *CR* | : *Calcutta Review.* |
| Cr. ed. | : Critical edition. |
| *Dakṣa* | : *Dakṣa Smṛti.* |
| *Dham* | : *Dhammapada.* |
| *DHI* | : *Development of Hindu Iconography* by Banerjea, J.N. |
| *Dīgh. Nik.* | : *Dīgha Nikāya.* |
| *Dip.* | : *Dipa Vaṁśa.* |
| *DKA* | : *Dynasties of the Kali Age*—Pargiter. |
| *Drah. Gṛ. S.* | : *Drahyāna Gṛhya Sūtra.* |
| *DRBCV* | : *D.R. Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume.* |
| *DUJ* | : *Dacca University Journal.* |

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| *DUS* | : *Dacca University Study.* |
| *DVPCV* | : *Prof. D.V. Potdar Commemoration Volume.* |
| *EAI* | : *Education in Ancient India* by Altekar. |
| ed. | : edition or editor (as the case may be). |
| *EHD* | : *Early History of Deccan* by Bhandarkar. |
| *EHI* | : *Early History of India* by Smith. |
| *EHVŚ* | : *Materials for the study of the Early History of the Vaisnavism* by Ray Chaudhari. |
| *El. HI.* | : *Element of Hindu Iconography* by Rao. |
| *EM* | : *Epic Mythology* by Hopkins. |
| *Ep. Ind.* | : *Epigraphia Indica.* |
| *ERE* | : *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* ed. by Hastings. |
| f/ff | : following/followings. |
| fig/figs | : Figure/figures. |
| fn | : Footnote. |
| *Gar.* | : *Garuḍa Purāṇa.* |
| *Gaui.* | : *Gautama Smṛti.* |
| *Gaut. Dh. S.* | : *Gautama* Dharmasūtra. |
| *GBI* | : *The Greeks in Bactria and India* by Tarn |
| *GBG* | : *Gaya and Buddha Gaya* by Barua. |
| *GEI* | : *The Great Epic of India* by Hopkins. |
| *GI* | : *Glories of India on Indian Culture and Civilization* by Acharya. |
| *GKM* | : *Gupta Kalina Mudrayen* by Altekar. |
| *Gobh. Gr. S.* | : *Gobhila Gṛhya Sūtra.* |
| *Gop. Br.* | : *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa.* |
| *Harṣa* | : *Harṣa Charita.* |
| *HDS* | : *History of* Dharmśāstra by Kane. |
| *HFAIC* | : *A History of Fine Arts in India Burma and Cylon* by Smith. |
| *HGAI* | : *Historical Geography of Ancient India* by Law. |

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| *HGH* | : *Hindu Gods and Heroes* by Barenett. |
| *HI* | : *History of India by Jayaswal,* K.P. |
| *HIA* | : *History of Indian Architecture* by Acharya. |
| *HIIA* | : *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* by Coomarswamy. |
| *HIL* | : *History of Indian Literature* by Winternitz. |
| *HM* | : *Hindu Mythology* by Wilkins. |
| *HMHI* | : *History of Medieval Hindu India* by Vaidya. |
| HOS | : *Harvard Oriental Series.* |
| *H. Poly.* | : *Hindu Polytheism* by Danielou. |
| *HS* | : *Hindu Samskara* by Pandey, R.B. |
| *HSCM* | : *A Hand-book of the Sculptures in the Curzon Museum of Archaeology Muttra* by Agrawala. |
| *HSI* | : *History of Suicide in India* by Thakur, U. |
| *HSL* | : *History of Sanskrit Literature.* |
| *IA* | : *Indian Antiquary,* Bombay. |
| *Ibid.* | : ibidem. |
| *IC* | : *Indian Culture,* Calcutta. |
| *IHL* | : *Imperial History of India* by Jayaswal, K.P. |
| *IHQ* | : *Indian Historical Quartely,* Calcutta. |
| *IM* | : *Indian Mythology* by Fausboll. |
| *Ind. Cos.* | : *Indian Costume* by Ghurye. |
| *INM* | : *An Index to the Names in the Mahabharata* by Sorensen. |
| *I. Paṇ.* | : *India as known to Panini* by Agrawala. |
| *I. Pat.* | : *India in the time of Patanjali* by Puri. |
| *IR* | : *Indian Review.* |
| *ISL* | : *Indian Serpent Lore* by Vogel. |
| *IUK* | : *India under the Kusanas* by Puri. |
| *JAOS* | : *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Baltimore. |
| *JASB* | : *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Calcutta. |

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| *Jāt.* | : *Jātaka.* |
| *JBBRAS* | : *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Bombay. |
| *JBHU* | : *Journal of the Banaras Hindu University.* |
| *JBORS* | : *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Patna. |
| *JBRS* | : *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, Patna. |
| *JDL* | : *Journal of the* Departments *of Letters.* |
| *JESHO* | : *Journal of the Economic and Social History of Orient.* |
| *JGRS* | : *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society.* |
| *JIH* | : *Jonrnal of Indian History.* |
| *JISOA* | : *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.* |
| *JOI* | : *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.* |
| *JNSI* | : *Journal of the Oriental Institute.* |
| *JOR* | : *Journal of Oriental Research.* |
| *J & PATB* | : *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.* |
| *JRAS* | : *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, London. |
| *JSM* or *Jaina Stupa* | : *The Jaina Stupas and their Antiquities of Mathura* by Smith. |
| *JSVOI* | : *Journal of Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Insitute.* |
| *JUB* | : *Jourual of University of Bombay.* |
| *JUPHS* | : *Journal of the U.P. Historlcal Society.* |
| *K* | : *Kārḍa.* |
| *Kādam.* | : *Kādambarī of Bāṇa.* |
| *Kāma* | : *Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana.* |
| *Karpūra* | : *Karpūramañjarī of Rājaśekhara.* |
| *Kātyā. Var.* | : *Kātyāyana Varttikā.* |
| *Kātyā. Śr. S.* | : *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra.* |
| *Kaus. Br.* | : *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa.* |
| *Kaut.* | : *Kautilya's* |
| *Kāvya.* | : *Kāvyamīmānsā.* |

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| *Kh.* | : *Khaṇḍa.* |
| *Kh. Gṛ.S.* | : *Khadira Gṛhya Sūtra.* |
| *KMFV.* | : *K.M. Felicitation volume.* |
| *Kumār* | : *Kumārasambhavaṁ.* |
| *Kūr* | : *Kūrma Purāṇa.* |
| *Lalita* | : *Lalita Vistara.* |
| *LBG* | : *L'Art Greco-Bouddhique du Gandhara* by Foucher. |
| *Liṅg* | : *Liṅga Purāṇa.* |
| *LNEI* | : *Life in North-Eastern India in Mauryan Time* by Singh M.M. |
| *LSB* | : *La sculpture de Bodha Gaya* by Coomarswamy. |
| *LSM* | : *La Sculpture de Mathura* by Vogel. |
| *Mahā* or *Pat.* | : *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali. |
| *Mahāpari* | : *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.* |
| *Mait. Sam.* | : *Maitrayāni Saṁhitā.* |
| *Maj. Nik.* | : *Majjhima Nikāya.* |
| *Mālati* | : *Mālatimādhava of Bhavabhuti.* |
| *Mālavi* | : *Mālavikāgnimitram of Kālidāsa.* |
| *Man. Gr. S.* | : *Mānava Gṛhya Sūtra.* |
| *Manu* or *MS.* | : *Manu Smṛti.* |
| *MASI* | : *Mimoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.* |
| *Mārk* | : *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.* |
| *Mat.* | : *Matsya Purāṇa.* |
| *Mathura. Mus. Cat.* | : *Catalogue of the Archaeological Museum at Mathura* by Vogel. |
| *Mbh.* | : *Mahābhārata.* |
| *Megasthenes and Arrian* | : *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian* by McCrindle. |
| *Megha* | : *Meghadūta.* |
| *Mil. Pan.* | : *Milinda-pañho.* |
| *MMK* | : *Mañju Śrī Mūlakalpa.* |

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| *MR* | : *Modern Review.* |
| *Mṛchh.* | : *Mṛchchhakaṭika by Śūdraka.* |
| *MSA* | : *Maurya and Śuṅga Art by Ray, N.R.* |
| *Mus. No.* | : Museum Number. |
| *MV* | : *Mahāvagga.* |
| *Nār.* | : *Nārada* Smṛti. |
| *Naṭ. Śās.* | : *Nāṭya Śāstra.* |
| *NIA* | : *New Indian Antiquary.* |
| *Nir.* | : *Nirukta of Yāska.* |
| No/Nos. | : Number/Numbers. |
| N.S. | : New Series. |
| *NSP* | : Niranaya Sagara Press. |
| *NUJ* | : *Nagpur University Journal.* |
| *OC* | : *Oriental Conference.* |
| *ORLI* | : *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India* by Fraquhar. |
| *OST* | : *Original Sanskrit Text by Muir.* |
| *P* | : *Purāṇa.* |
| p/pp | : page/pages. |
| *Pad.* | : *Padma Purāṇa.* |
| *Pāṇ.* | : Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī.* |
| *Pañch. Br.* | : *Pañchviṁśa Brāhmaṇa.* |
| *Pār. Gṛ. S.* | : *Pāraskara Gṛhyasutra.* |
| *Parā* | : *Parāśara Smṛti.* |
| *PB* | : *Prabuddha Bhārata.* |
| *PBB* | : *Prāchīna Bhāratīya Veśa Bhūṣa* by Motichandra. |
| *PBI* | : *Pre-Buddhist India* by Mehta, R.L. |
| *PE* | : *Pillar Edict:* |
| *PEAI* | : *Political Economy in Ancient India* by Mudgal, B.S. |
| *PHAI* | : *Political History of Ancient India* by Ray-Chaudhari, H.C. |

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| *PI* | : *Purāṇa Index* by Dikshitar. |
| *PIHC* | : *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.* |
| *PKA* | : *The Purāṇa Texts of the Dynasties of the Kali Age* by Pargiter. |
| pl/pls | : plate/plates. |
| *PMC* | : *Catalogue of the coins of the Punjab Museum* by Whitehead. |
| *PO* | : *Poona Orientalist.* |
| *POC* | : *Proceedings of the (All India) Oriental Conference.* |
| *PRHC* | : *Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs* by Hazra. |
| pt/pts | : part/parts. |
| *PV* | : *Purāṇa Viṣaya Samanukramaṇikā* by Tondon. |
| *PWHC* | : *Position of women in Hindu Civilization* by Altekar. |
| Q. | : Quoted. |
| *QJMS* | : *Quartely Journal of* the *Mythic Society.* |
| *Raghu* | : *Raghuvaṁśa of Kālidāsa.* |
| *Rāj* | : *Rājataraṅginī* of Kalhaṇa. |
| *Rāma* | : *Rāmāyaṇa.* |
| *Bāl. K.* | : *Bālakāṇḍa.* |
| *AYK* | : *Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa.* |
| *Ār. K.* | : *Āraṇya Kānda.* |
| *Kiṣ. K.* | : *Kiṣkindā Kāṇḍa.* |
| *SK* | : *Sundara Kāṇḍa.* |
| *YK* | : *Yuddha Kāṇḍa.* |
| *RE* | : *Rock Edict* of Aśoka. |
| ref. | : reference. |
| *RGBCV* | : *R.G. Bhandarkar Commemoration volume.* |
| *RI* | : *Religion of India.* |
| *RPV* | : *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanisads by Keith.* |

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| *ṚV* | : *Ṛgveda.* |
| *ṚVC* | : *Ṛgvedic culture* by Das, A.C. |
| *S* | : *Smṛti.* |
| *ŚAI* | : *Śūdras in Ancient India* by Sharma, R.S. |
| *Śākun* | : *Abhijñāna Śākuntalaṁ* of Kālidāsa. |
| *Śaṁkh. S.* | : *Śaṁkha Smṛti.* |
| *Śāṇ. Gṛ. S.* | : *Śāṅkhyāyana Gṛhya Sūtra.* |
| *Sārth.* | : *Sārthavāha* by Motichandra. |
| *Śat. Br.* | : *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.* |
| *SBE* | : *Sacred Books of the East.* |
| *SED* | : *Sanskrit English Dictionary.* |
| *Sel. Ins.* | : *Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization* by Sircar, D.C. |
| *SEP* | : *Studies in the Epics and Purāṇas* by Pusalkar, A.D. |
| *SIA* | : *Studies in Indian Antiquities* by Ray Chaudhari, H.C. |
| *SIH* | : *An Introduction to the study of Indian History* by Kosambi, D.D. |
| *SIS* | : *A Survey of Indian Sculpture* by Sarasvati, S.K. |
| *Skand.* | : *Skanda Purāṇa.* |
| *Sm. Ch.* | : *Smṛti Chandrikā.* |
| *Sm. Nik.* | : *Samutta Nikāya.* |
| *SONEI* | : *Social Organisation in North East India in Buddha's Time* by Fick, R. |
| *SRENI* | : *Social and Rural Economy of Northern India* by Bose, A.N. |
| *SRGS* | : *Social and Religious Life in the Gṛhya Sūtra* by Apte, V.M. |
| *SS* | : *Sindhu Sabhyatā* by Kala. |
| *SSHA* | : *Some Aspects of the Earliest Social History of India* by Sarkar, S.C. |
| *STLH* | : *Studies in Tamil Literature and History* by Dikshitar. |

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| *Sutt* | : *Suttanipāta.* |
| *SV* | : *Sāma Veda.* |
| *Svapna* | : *Svapnavāsavadattā.* |
| *SVV* | : *A study of Vāstu Vidya by Bhattacharyya.* |
| *Tait. Ar.* | : *Taittrīya Araṇyaka.* |
| *Tait. Br.* | : *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa.* |
| *Tait. S.* or *Saṁ* | : *Taittirīya Saṁhitā.* |
| Tr. | : Translation or translated (as the case may be). |
| *TSW* | : *Tree and Serpent worship in Ancient India* by Fergusson. |
| *Up.* | : *Upaniṣad.* |
| *Uttara* | : *Uttarādhyana Sūtra.* |
| *VA* | : *Vedic Age* ed. Majumdar, R.C. |
| *Vā.* | : *Vāyu Purāṇa.* |
| *VAI* | : *Vratyās in Ancient India* by Choudhary, R.K. |
| *Vāj. S.* | : *Vājasaneya Saṁhitā.* |
| *Vām.* | : *Vāmana Purāṇa.* |
| *Var.* | : *Varāha Purāṇa.* |
| *Vas. Dh. S.* | : *Vasiṣṭha Dharma Sūtra.* |
| *VBQ* | : *Vishva Bharati Quarterly.* |
| *VGA* | : *Vakataka Gupta Age* by Altekar. |
| *Ved. Ind.* | : *Vedic Index of names and subjects* by Macdonell. |
| *Vikram* | : *Vikramorvasīya* of Kālidāsa. |
| *VSM* | : *Vaiṣṇavism Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems* by Bhandarkar. |
| *Viṣṇu* | : *Viṣṇu Smṛti.* |
| *Viṣṇudharma* | : *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa.* |
| *Viṣ. P.* | : *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* |
| *Ved. Myth.* | : *Vedic Mythology* by Macdonell. |
| Vol/Vols. | : Volume/volumes. |
| *WAI* | : *War in Ancient India* by Dikshitar. |

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| Watt's *Dictionary* | : Watt's *Dictionary of Economic Products.* |
| *WWI* | : *Wonder that was India* by Basham. |
| *Yāj.* | : *Yājñavalkya Smṛti.* |
| *YV* | : *Yajurveda.* |
| *ZII* | : *Zeitschrift fur Indologic and Iranistic.* |
| *ZDMG* | : *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesseleschaft.* |

# List of Illustrations

# Contents

Chapter I

# Introduction

The Purāṇas hold a very significant position in the sacred and secular literature of Hindus, being regarded as the next in importance only to the Vedic literature. They are regarded as having an equal antiquity and sanctity with the Vedas. They are very similar to the epics and the smṛtis both in form and contents. The Purāṇas are of much importance for the study of Indian philosophy and religion, and constitute a vast treasuretrove for getting knowledge of all aspects and phases of Hinduism. Pargiter opines, "taken collectively, they may be described as a popular encyclopaedia of ancient and medieval Hinduism, religious, philosophical, historical, personal, social and political."[1]

### *Purāṇa* : *Definition and Characteristics*

It is very essential, for getting a correct idea about the Purāṇa, to deal with its meaning, definition and characteristics. The *Vāyu Purāṇa,* while dealing with the etymology of the Purāṇa, says that the term Purāṇa means "that which lives from ancient times."[2] The *Matsya Purāṇa* also says that the Purāṇas are the "records of past events."[3] Originally, therefore, the term 'Purāṇa' was regarded as "ancient tale" or "old narrative". The Purāṇas, in the form of legends, existed from very ancient times. It seems that there was no Purāṇic literature as such in those days. It is difficult to say whether Purāṇa stood for any actual book at the time of the *Atharvaveda*.[4] It is clear from the *Chhāndogya Upaniṣad*[5] that a definite work was intended by the term 'Purāṇa'. In the Sūtra literature we find a reference to the prevalence of the real Purāṇas. Jackson and others believe that there was only one Purāṇa in the beginning.[6] But this view is not tenable.

The singular number might have been used collectively to designate the group of *Purāṇa Saṁhitā*. Furthermore, different Purāṇas are of different periods and are the products of different places. Hence, Pusalkar rightly suggests that there was no original single Purāṇa, in the same way as there is no original single Veda or single Brāhmaṇa.[7]

*Purāṇas : Their Development*

Pusalkar[8] has tried to trace the development of the Purāṇa literature. He holds the view that upto the period of the *Atharvaveda*, the Purāṇas signified only tales and were allied with *Itihāsa*, *Gāthās*, *Nārāśaṁsīs*, etc. It seems to be doubtful whether the term Purāṇa conveyed any class of Purāṇic literature. Another period, in the development of the Purāṇas, begins with the Bhārata war because the canon of the Purāṇa was fixed some four generations after the Bhārata war. Furthermore, the genealogical accounts, subsequent to this period, are mentioned as "future" in the Purāṇas. The next stage begins with the upaniṣadic age when chapters on cosmogony, the Sāṁkhya and upaniṣadic idea were included in the Purāṇas. In the Sūtra period the term 'Purāṇa' came to be regarded as a particular class of books because Āpastamba refers to the self-contradictory title *Bhaviṣyatpurāṇa* . Hazra has shown that matters on Hindu rites and customs, which are strictly the domain of the Smṛtis and Dharmasūtras, were added to the Purāṇas not later than the middle of the fourth century A.D.[9] Later on, the compilers, taking full liberty of taking all sorts of materials, made the Purāṇas all-comprehensive and encyclopaedic like the *Mahābhārata*. It also seems that every successive generation attempted to elaborate the Purāṇas by various devices.

It is also essential to note the general characteristics of the Purāṇas. Amara Siṁha (fifth century A.D.) refers to the *Pañchalakṣaṇa* of the Purāna, *i.e.*, having five characteristics, which are *sarga* (creation), *pratisarga* (dissolution and recreation), *vaṁśa* (divine genealogies), *manvantara* (ages of Manus), and *vaṁśyānucharita* (genealogies of kings). This definition is found in some Purāṇas.

None of the present Purāṇas is totally in agreement with this definition; because some Purāṇas preserve much more than these

while others passingly touch these and deal with other topics. It is significant to note that *pañchalakṣaṇa* occupies an insignificant part of the extant Purāṇas. Thus, it is obvious that religious instruction was not one of their primary aims, nor were they originally written for the propagation of sectarian ideas. Even the extant Purāṇas contain the chapters on *dāna* (gifts), *vratas* (religious observances), *tirthas* (sacred places), *śrāddha* (rites in honour of the manes), etc. Hence, it seems that the extant Purāṇas render the *pañchalakṣaṇa* definition merely a theoretical thing, not an actual fact. With a view to facing this difficulty the Purāṇas themselves begin to mention that the *pañchalakṣaṇa* definition is intended for the *Upa-Purāṇa* (minor-Purāṇa), and the *Mahā Purāṇa*[10] (major Purāṇa) has got *daśalakṣaṇa* (ten characteristics), *i.e.*, *vṛtti* (means of livelihood), *rakṣā* (incarnations of gods), *mukti* (final emancipation), *hetu* (unmanifest) and *apāśraya* (Brahmaṇ). These characteristics also do not include several features and contents of the extant Purāṇas. H.P. Sastri has traced out a comprehensive definition in the *Matsya Purāṇa* which says that besides the *pañchalakṣaṇa*, the Purāṇa refers to the glorification of Brahma, Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Rudra, the dissolution and preservation of the world, *dharma* (righteous conduct), *artha* (economics), *kāma* (erotics) and *mokṣa* (emancipation).[11] Even this comprehensive definition does not include all facts as found in Purāṇas. It may be suggested that like the *Mahābhārata*, the Purāṇas have the features of constant change and floatingness. It also appears that their texts are full of numerous revisions, additions, omissions and modifications. The one and the only universal characteristic of a Purāṇa seems that it should be old. H.P. Sastri observes, "Anything old may be the subject of a Purāṇa and it covers all the aspects of life."[12]

## *Purāṇas : Their Number and Grouping*

The number and classification of the Purāṇas must also be discussed here. According to the traditional view there are eighteen *Mahā-Purāṇas* and eighteen *Upa-Purāṇas*. The names of the *Mahā-Purāṇas* are given in almost all Purāṇas, mostly in the same order. The list of the *Mahā-Purāṇas* in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[13] runs thus : *Brāhma, Pādma,*

*Śaiva, Bhāgavata, Nāradīya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Agni, Bhaviṣyat, Brahmavaivarta, Liṁga, Vārāha, Skanda, Vāmana, Kūrma, Matsya, Garuḍa* and *Brahmāṇḍa.* Some Purāṇas mention *Śiva* in place of *Vāyu,* and *Devī-Bhāgavata* instead of (Vaiṣṇava) *Bhāgavata.* A.D. Pusalkar has shown that the *Śiva* is not a *Mahā-Purāṇa.*[14] By including both the *Śiva* and the *Vāyu,* Parigiter[15] takes their number to be 19. Farquhar[16] further increases the number of the Purāṇas, as he includes the *Harivaṁśa* in the list. But there is no basis for increasing the traditional number.

The *Mahā-Purāṇas* have been subdivided and they are styled as *Sāttvika, Tāmasa* and *Rājasa,* evidently from the standpoint of the vaiṣṇava. According to the *Pādma Purāṇa,*[17] the *Sāttvika* Purāṇas are the *Viṣṇu,* the *Nāradīya,* the *Bhāgavata,* the *Garuḍa,* the *Padma* and the *Vārāha;* the *Tāmasa* Purāṇas are the *Matsya,* the *Kūrma,* the *Liṁga,* the *Śiva,* the *Agni,* and the *Skanda,* and the *Rājasa* Purāṇas include the *Brahmāṇḍa,* the *Brahmavaivarta,* the *Mārkaṇḍeya,* the *Brāhma,* the *Vāmana,* and the *Bhaviṣyat.*

The *Skanda Purāna*[18] mentions ten Purāṇas as referring to the glory and the greatness of Śiva, four of Brahmā and two each of Devī and Hari. The *Matsya Purāṇa,* praising Agni, has been regarded as *Rājasa* and those, who glorify Sarasvati and Pitṛs, are regarded as *Saṁkīrṇa.*[19]

Dikshitar[20] has endeavoured to classify the Purāṇas into five groups which are as follows :

(i) Brahmā group includes the *Brāhma* and the *Pādma.*

(ii) Agni-group consists of only the *Agni Purāṇa.*

(iii) Śiva-group comprises the *Śiva,* the *Skanda,* the *Liṁga,* the *Kūrma,* the *Vāmana,* the *Vārāha,* the *Bhavisyat,* the *Matsya,* the *Mārkaṇḍeya,* and the *Brahmāṇḍa.*

(iv) Sūrya group is only of the *Brahmavaivarta* and

(v) Viṣṇu group includes the *Nārada,* the *Bhāgavata,* the *Garuḍa,* and the *Viṣṇu.*

After a thorough and critical study of the contents of the Purāṇas, H.P. Sastri[21] has divided them into six-groups on the basis of the subject-matters as found in the Purāṇas.

(i) The first group, consisting of the *Garuḍa*, the *Agni*, and the *Nāradīya*, contains the materials of all the great works in arts and sciences in Sanskrit literature; Purānic material, medicine, grammar, dramaturgy, music, astrology, etc. So this group has been regarded as the veritable encyclopaedia of literature.

(ii) The *Padma*, the *Skanda* and the *Bhavisyat* have been included in the second group which mainly deals with *tīrthas* and *vratas*.

(iii) The *Brahma*, the *Bhāgavata* and the *Brahmavaivarta* are in the third group and these Purāṇas have got two clear revisions. The central portions of these Purāṇas have been added twice.

(iv) The *Brahmāṇḍa* and the lost *Vāyu* are included in the fourth group, which has been called a historical group.

(v) The fifth group consists of the *Liṁga*, the *Vāmana*, and the *Mārkaṇḍeya*. These Purāṇas are sectarian in character, so they are included in a separate group. According to H.P. Sastri, the *Liṁga* mentions *Liṁga Pūjā*, while the *Vāmana* deals with Śaiva sects. The *Mārkaṇḍeya* mainly devotes itself to Devī.

(vi) Lastly, the sixth group consists of the old Purāṇas which have been revised. It includes the *Varāha*, the *Kūrma*, and the *Matsya*. These Purāṇas do not speak of the various incarnations of Viṣṇu; but the *Varāha Purāṇa* devotes only half of it to the Varāha incarnation, the *Matsya*, about one third to the Matsya incarnation; and the *Kūrma* one-eight only to *Kūrma* incarnation.

### *Researches on the Purāṇas*

The Purāṇic literature has attracted the attention of many

scholars from the 18th century onwards. The history of the Purāṇic researches[22] ranges over a period of more than a century. It may be interesting to study the progress of knowledge and translations of the Purāṇas in Europe. The decisive period of the analytical understanding of the Indian texts in Europe opens with the arrival in India, towards 1780, of some European pioneers who made themselves interested in the new culture they met.

The first of them is Sir William Jones,[23] a foremost Sanskrit scholar among Europeans, and who with the collaboration of a few Englishmen like Charles Wilkins, heralded a new epoch in the field of the Purāṇic researches by bringing to the fore the following aspects *viz.*, (i) the ancient geography of India from the Purāṇas, (ii) the Indian mythologies from the Purāṇas, and (iii) the translations of the Purāṇas into English. He employed many Pandits to extract several passages from the Purāṇas to illustrate the Hindu mythology, chronology and history. But the Pandits, being unacquainted with the Purāṇas, rarely read more than one or two Purāṇas such as the *Bhāgavata* and the *Viṣṇu*. With all the initial difficulties of a foreigner, treading into the ancient lores, Jones could not get much success in the Purāṇic researches. And Francis Wilford, too, one of the first Western scholars to study the traditional geography and history of India on the basis of the Purāṇas, could not be as successful as his colleagues because of his uncritical and unscientific attitude towards the erroneous texts, but William Jones was kind enough to publish Francis Wilford's conclusions in the *Asiatic Researches*.

In the thirties of the 19th century, Mr. H.H. Wilson accelerated the process of the Purāṇic researches. He did some pioneer works on the Purāṇa literature and hence, he might be regarded as the father of modern Purāṇic researches. By his scientific and thorough study of the Purāṇas, he riveted the attention of scholars upon the importance of the Purāṇic studies. For the increasing importance and popularity of the Purāṇic studies Wilson should be given special credit. He published his English translation of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[24] with an exhaustive introduction and critical notes. Thus he inspired Indologists to strive for a correct idea of the nature and special features of the Purāṇas. But

to him the Purāṇas were only pious frauds. He was not much interested in historical facts lying embedded in them. In this connection the name of Colonel Vans Kennedy, Wilson's contemporary, deserves to be mentioned. He, no doubt, regarded the Purāṇas as an important ancient Indian literature, but he did not contribute much from the historian's point of view. He protested against the opinions of Wilson, in the form of letters to *London Asiatic Journal*[25] which had been reprinted by the late Editor of Wilson's translation of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* as an appendix to that Purāṇa. He also emphasised the fact that the Purāṇas, as a whole were as much a sacred work of the Hindus as the Vedic literature. He strongly and emphatically pleaded that the Purāṇa literature must be regarded as a class of ancient literature. In 1840, Eugene Burnouf published the first book of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the work was completed by Hauvettee Besnault and Roussel in 1898. Colonel Wilford[26] wanted to do some research works on the lines of Jones, but the former could not get much success. The names of the compilers of the catalogues of the manuscripts like Thomas Aufrecht and Julius Eggeling must be mentioned here, but they did not concern themselves with the historical aspects of the Purāṇas. This was the condition of the Purāṇic researches upto the beginning of the 20th century.

The beginning of the present century heralded a new age of awakening in India which may be said to be due to the national movement, and people began to take a keen interest in ancient Indian history and culture. Researches on ancient Indian History also got encouragement, and naturally the Purāṇas received attention of the scholars. The importance of the Purāṇas, for a correct and a comprehensive understanding of ancient Indian history, was first emphasised by Pargiter towards the beginning of the 20th century. He made a critical and deep study of the Purāṇas, and drew the attention of scholars to their historical importance. His two famous books, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*[27] and *The Purāṇa Texts of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*[28], lay great emphasis on the value of the Purāṇas for the reconstruction of early history. These two books evoked a revival of interest in a closer study of the Puranic literature by orientalists. It

was he who, for the first time, advocated the view that the Purāṇas preserved genuine historical materials which, when used with discretion could yield important results. We have from Winternitz a sound and scholarly chapter on the Purāṇas in his work, *History of Indian Literature.*[29] E.J. Rapson also contributed to the study of Purāṇas in first Volume of the *Cambridge History of India.*[30] Another valuable contribution to the Purāṇic studies is Kirfel's *Das Purāṇa Pañchalakṣaṇa*[31]. The author divides the texts of the Purāṇas into three different group and gives relevant extracts from each group under the five topics constituting the characteristic features of the Purāṇas. Foot-notes give exact references to each stanza of the text, and variations and divergent texts have been mentioned in parallel columns.

We must also mention Meyer who has written *Gesetzbuch Und Purāṇa*[32] which deals with the interrelation of the Purāṇas and law-books in ancient India. Among the early Indologists it was Lassen who critically examined the application of the *pañcha lakṣaṇa* of the extant Purāṇas.[33] It would be a serious omission not to mention in this connection, the name of Rai Saheb Negendra Nath Vasu who had taken great interest in the Purāṇas. In his article on the Purāṇas, published in Bengali Encyclopaedia, *Viśva-Koṣa*[34], he has treated the contents of each Purāṇa. He has given the names of 18 *Mahāpurāṇas* in a tabular form which is very useful to anyone studying the Purāṇas. S.N. Pradhan's *Chronology of Ancient India* makes considerable use of the Puraṇic material. H.C. Raychaudhari in his *Political History of Ancient India*[35], has also taken into account the evidence as known from the Purāṇic tradition. A good beginning in dating the Purāṇas was made by H.P. Sastri, who discussed their probable dates in *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscript.*[36] A serious attempt was made by V.R.R. Dikshitar to utilize the Purāṇas for the reconstruction of the social and cultural history of India. Dikshitar[37] prepared his famous *Purāṇa Index* in three volumes, which is primarily an index of proper names of persons, places, tirthas, etc., and of a few Purāṇic terms and subjects such as *sarga, pratisarga*, etc., though the treatment is rather brief and insufficient. He also wrote about the flood-legends in the Purāṇa, in his *Matsya Purāṇa, A Study.*[38] His *Some*

*Aspects of the Vāyu Purāṇa*[39] refers to the Cosmogony, historical portions, philosophy, music, etc., of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. In 1935, he published an article *Polity in the Purāṇas*[40] in which he touched upon in four pages the political organisation as known from the *Viṣṇu*, the *Mārkaṇḍeya* and the *Agni*. R.C. Hazra, who has been contributing number of articles on different aspects of the Purānas[41] in general and on individual Purāṇas[42]; in his valuable *Studies in The Purāṇic Records On Hindu Rites And Customs*,[43] he has studied the Purāṇas critically and has fixed the chronology of the Purāṇic chapters dealing with Hindu rites and customs. He has also dealt with the Purāṇic Hindu society. His another work is the *Studies in the Upa-Purāṇas*[44] which is also a significant contribution to the cultural history known from the Purāṇas. These two books are very useful to those scholars who want to set themselves to the solution of textual problems relating to the Purāṇas. D.R. Patil's *Cultural History from the Vāyu Purāṇa*[45] is the first serious study of the cultural history on the basis of the data collected from the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. This book is divided into two parts; the first part gives the facts collected from the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, while the second interprets them in the light of other materials and puts them in their chronological setting. Patil's researches show three chronological lists of tribes and place-names with cross references. It may be mentioned here that with the division of the book into facts and interpretation, there are much repetitions of facts. Furthermore, in this book no attempt has been made to determine the dates of the various strata of the Purāṇa and hence, the material derived from the Purāṇa cannot be ascribed to any period. In fact no real progress in the field of the cultural study of the Purāṇas was possible till the date of their final compilation was tentatively fixed. D.R. Mankad has edited the *Yuga Purāṇa*[46] from the *Gārgi Saṁhitā* which throws new light on the Maurya and Śuṅga periods of Indian History. His *Purāṇic Chronology*[47] contains a detailed discussion of various theories. It is also an important research work on the Purāṇa literature. Yaspala Tondon's *Purāṇa Viṣaya Samanukramaṇikā*[48] is a very valuable work on the Purāṇas. The *Harivamsa Purana Ka Samskṛtika Vivechanā*[49] by Veenapani Pandey also deserves mention. V.S. Agrawala has shown his keen interest in the Purāṇic research by writing a few books on Purāṇas, such as

*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa Eka Sāṁskṛtika Adhyayana,*[50] *Matsya Purāṇa—A Study.*[51] He has tried to present the cultural history of the Purāṇas in a new way. He also lays stress on the symbolic interpretation of the Purāṇic terms and has also corroborated his conclusion by the archaeological evidences. His researches on the Purāṇa literature infuse a new energy and enthusiasm in the mind of the researchers on the Purāṇas. Other scholars like G.C. Bose,[52] Durga Sankar Shastri,[53] Y.V. Kolhatkar,[54] S. Subba Rao,[55] Jagdish Lala Sastri,[56] also have taken keen interest in the study of the Purāṇas. There are numerous articles by many scholars on the Purāṇas[57] in general and the individual Purāṇas.[58] The works, done by the All India Kashiraj Trust, deserve special mention in the field of Purāṇic studies. The Trust has planned for the preparation of an exhaustive and a comprehensive subject-concordance[59] of all the Mahāpurāṇas including the *Śiva* and the *Devī-Bhāgavata* and of some important *Upa-Purāṇas.* The work of preparing the Purāṇa-concordance has been offered to Rama Shanker Bhattacharya who has worked under the guidance of Mm. Gopinath Kaviraja, Mangal Deva Sastri and V.S. Agrawala. In order to facilitate special studies on the Purāṇa and to provide an exclusive form for the articles from scholars interested in the study and researches in the Purāṇic literature, the *Purāṇa* bulletin is being published by the Purāṇa Prakāsan Samiti of the Trust. For the preparation of the critical edition of the *Brahma-Purāṇa,* the Trust has procured some manuscripts of this Purāṇa[60] V.S. Agrawala was entrusted with the task of preparing the critical edition of the *Vāmana Purāṇa*[61]. V. Raghavan of Madras University is also preparing the critical edition of the *Matsya Purāṇa.*[62]

We have just seen that the importance of Purāṇic studies has been engaging the attention of Indologists, both in India and abroad, for the last many decades. Though valuable work has been done in the field of Purāṇic researches, many aspects still remain to be touched. The difficulties with regard to scientific research on the Purāṇas are already there. The ciritical recension of the Purāṇa text, prepared according to the modern principle of textual criticism is very essential for research on the Purāṇic literature. Besides, an exhaustive Purāṇa-concordance of various subjects, of proper names of persons and

places, an alphabetical index of all the Ślokas of the Purāṇas, etc., is also a desideratum for the critical study of the Purāṇas.

History does not signify political history only, but it has its cultural aspects also. The old and orthodox idea of history, mainly signifying political history, is now dying out and it is no longer accepted by historians all over the world. In reconstructing history, historians have taken into consideration two different aspects : political and cultural. The political aspect of history is concerned with the idea of the acts of government, the internal policy, diplomacy and war. These facts are regarded as the kernal of history. But the view is gaining ground that the purpose of history is to indicate the condition of civilization and to collect the facts of the social and cultural life of a people. Henri Pirenne has rightly observed that the object of the study of history is the development of human societies in space and time. We generally neglect to note the condition of society, religion and philosophy in political history. The old meaning of the political history has lost some prestige in the west, but it has not lost its hold on the promoters of historical researches in India. Many scholars[63] have devoted many pages on the political history as found in the Puraṇic literature but a few have paid attention to the cultural side. The cultural history has not received due attention from scholars of ancient Indian history.[64] A few scholars like D.R. Patil, V.S. Agrawala, etc., have discussed the cultural aspect of Purāṇic literature, no doubt; even then cultural study of many Puraṇas is still untouched. Hence, in the present work, the cultural aspects of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* only has been discussed.

It is a well-known fact that the *Vāyu*, the *Viṣṇu*, the *Mārkaṇḍeya* and the *Matsya* are regarded by scholars as the "ancient Purāṇas." V.S. Agrawala has made an exhaustive study of the cultural aspects of the *Matsya Purāṇa*[65] and the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*.[66] D.R. Patil has critically examined the cultural aspects of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.[67] So there is no question of taking these Purāṇas which have already been critically studied by eminent scholars. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is also one of the ancient Purāṇas and in spite of its brilliant translation made by H.H. Wilson no serious attempt has been made to bring to light the

different facts of the cultural life on basic of this particular Purāṇa. Many scholars[68] have written articles on several Purāṇas; but except Hazra, any one else has hardly touched the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Hazra[69] has only tried to fix the date of this Purāṇa. Recenty, Sarvanand Pathak has tried to represent the cultural life of India in his book *Viṣṇu Purāṇa kā Bhārata*;[70] but he fails to bring out any new point regarding the date of the compilation of the Purāṇa. He is also silent on the unique features of the socio-religious life in the Purāṇic period. But my approach, while dealing with the cultural aspect of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, is quite different as will be appeared.

I have tried to show in the first chapter of my work that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* continued to be transmitted orally for a pretty long time. The purāṇa was not written for any particular class or caste but for all. Our Purāṇa, like other Brahmanical texts, has been written in sanskrit with a view to preserving the sanctity of the Brahmanical religion. An attempt has been made in this work to bring out the sources on which the main contents of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* are based though only tentatively. The Purāṇa under consideration presents a very rich collection of materials for the study of the cultural life. The greatest difficulty, which makes the study of the Purāṇa impracticable and unscientific, is the want of a proper dating of the Purāṇa. Unfortunately no systematic attempt has been made to remove this long-felt want, probably because, as Mr. P.V. Kane says, "the chronology of the Purāṇas is, like that of epics, a subject, full of perplexing problems." The work done by such eminent scholars as H.H. Wilson, Dikshitar, C.V. Vaidya, Winternitz and the others in regard to the approximate date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, is open to criticism and not acceptable to all. Hazra's view on the date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is rather more convincing. Attention has been directed in the present work to determine the date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* as approximately as possible. I have also fixed the upper and lower limits of the date of the compilation of this Purāṇa. In this work an attempt has also been made to locate the place where the compilation of the Purāṇa under consideration took place.

In my present work I have mainly confined myself to the study

of the social, economic and religious aspects of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, and have excluded other things from the purview of my investigation. I have added an Appendix, too, which gives the names of the rivers, the mountains, tribes, towns and countries of Bharatavarsa, as found in our Purāṇa. This Appendix should be considered very useful for locating the place of the compilation of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.*

For having a proper view of the cultural life in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the contemporary history in a broader perspective, earlier texts have been utilized. This work is based on a first hand study of the original sources. Materials from the other Purāṇas have been taken into account. In translating some of the passages of the Purāṇas and smṛti works, H.H. Wilson's *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, F.E. Pargiter's *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Mahendra Nath Chatterjje's *Śrīmadbhāgavata* and Buhler's *Law of Manu* (*SBE.* Vol. XXV), *Institutes of Gautama* (*SBE.* Vol. II) and *Institutes of Baudhāyana* (*SBE.* Vol. XIV) have been extremely helpful to me. For the present work the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* of the Gita Press edition (Gorakhpur) has been utilized. This edition rarely differs from other editions. Regarding the fixation of the date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I have been guided by the indication of R.C. Hazra's book "*Studies in the Puranic Records and Hindu Rites and Customs.*" In the chapters dealing with social and religious life, I have been guided by P.V. Kane's book *History of Dharmaśāstra* (Vol. II, Pts. I and II and Vol. IV) which is undoubtedly the most valuable work on the subject. D.R. Patil's *Cultural History from the Vāyu Purāṇa*, V.S. Agrawala's *India As Known to Pāṇini* and Puri's *India in the Time of Patañjali* have also been useful in the preparation of this book. An attempt has also been made to corroborate the evidences by other contemporary archaeological and literary sources.

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Chapter II

# Date and the Place of the Compilation of the Visnu Purana

## Section I

*General Features of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa*

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is regarded as one of the eighteen Mahāpurāṇas. It has been divided into 6 *aṁśas*, each having several chapters. This Purāṇa is very important from several points of view. It contains valuable information regarding the political[1] and cultural history of the period to which it relates. It belongs to the *Pañcharātra* sect. Hazra holds that it is the best representative of the whole class of sectarian Purāṇas, since it is purely vaiṣṇava in its teaching from beginning to end and yet retains with considerable faithfulness the character of the old uncertain Purāṇas.[2] Besides, it contains, like the other Purāṇas, materials regarding contemporary socio-religious life *viz.*, the duties of the castes and āśramas[3], hells[4], Indian cosmogony, cosmography[5], theology, heterdox[6] system, etc.

It appears from our Purāṇa that Parāśara is a prominent interlocutor who related the whole Purāṇa to Maitreya. This Purāṇa was transmitted from one person to another for a long time.[7] It was communicated by Brahmā to Ṛbhu, who related it to Priyavarta, by whom it was imparted to Bhāguri. Bhāguri recited it to Stambhamitra and he to Dadhīchi, who gave it to Sārsvata. Bhṛgu, in his turn received it from Sārsvata and imparted it to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the Nāga King and to Pūraṇa of the same race, by whom it was repeated to their monarch Vāsuki. Vāsuki communicated it to Vatsa, and he to Aśvatara, from whom it successively proceeded to Kambala and Elāputra. When Muni Vedaśirā descended to Pātāla, he recited there

the whole Purāṇa to the Nāgas, and who communicated it to Pramati. Pramati consigned it to Jātukarṇa who taught it to many other holy persons. Through the blessing of Vasiṣṭha, it came to Parāśara who imparted it to Maitreya. This Purāṇa further informs that Maitreya will teach it to Śinīka at the end of the Kali age. It is, thus, clear that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* was transmitted from one generation to another in the form of stories.

It is clear from our Purāṇa that it had been developed from time to time. New materials were added by the compiler of the Purāṇa as he came to know the facts. The text of the Purāṇa has been subjected to numerous revisions, additions, omissions and modifications. It is difficult to sift out such chapters but a few examples can be cited to support this view. The present *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is not the same as it originally was. We read in other Purāṇas that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* has got 23,000 ślokas. But this is not a fact. The number of the ślokas of our Purāṇa has been reduced a lot. It appears that several portions have been omitted from the extant Purāṇa. Several ślokas of our Purāṇa, quoted in several Nibandhas,[8] are missing in the present edition. It clearly shows that several ślokas had been omitted from our Purāṇa. The examples of additions and modifications in the chapters of the Purāṇa can also be marked. It is evident from the Purāṇa that Parāśara, in the first *aṁśa* described the origin[9] of gods, Ṛṣis, Dānava, human beings, etc., but Maitreya[10] again asked him to narrate the origin of creation in great detail. At another place Parāśara[11] speaks of the origin of Lakṣmī by Bhṛgu on Khyāti, but Maitreya, by raising doubt in such mythology, tells Parāśara that it is commonly said that the goddess Śrī was born from the sea of milk, when it was churned for ambrosia; how then could she be regarded as the daughter of Bhṛgu by Khyāti?[12] Parāśara[13] shows his inability to answert his question. Later on, he replies the question asked by Maitreya in the next chapter. The former asys, "But with respect to the question thou hast asked me Maitreya, relating to the history of Śrī, hear from me the tale as it was told to me by Marīchi."[14] Parāśara, thus, describes in great detail the origin of Śrī from the churning of the ocean.[15] It appears

that in the beginning the compiler of the Purāṇa might not have been acquainted with this story. Hence this portion seems to have been added a bit later, most probably at the time of final compilation of the Purāṇa when its compiler become well acquainted with the story. At another place in the same Purāṇa we find that though Parāśara has already narrated the family of Bhṛgu, Maitreya again asks him to describe the same in detail.[16] It is clearly an example of the addition of this portion in the Purāṇa. On being asked by Maitreya, Parāśara again describes the birth of gods, Gandharvas, serpents and goblins in detail.[17] Parāśara describes the story of Prahlāda at one place in very brief,[18] but Maitreya asks him to narrate the whole story in great detail. Then he again describes the story of Prahlāda in a few chapters.[19] Hence these chapters appear to have been added later on. It is difficult to trace out all the chapters which were added to the Purāṇa. Hence it appears that several portions were added to it at the final stage of the compilation of the Purāṇa.

A critical study of the Purāṇa shows that it was not written for any particular class but for people in general. Here a legitimate question may arise. Why was the Purāṇa literature made for the common people ? It was honestly felt that it would take more than one's life-time to study the sacred and complicated Vedic texts and actually they came to be the monopoly of a few only. The complicated language and elaborate rituals in the vedic texts could not have certainly attracted the minds of general people. So masses must have hankered after some religious literature which would give them the old stories and legends for their delight and mental tranquillity. The Itihāsa and Purāṇa literature served this purpose and thus this literature became popular among the general people. The Purāṇa, in general, contained much interesting and valuable informations, and arrangements were made to elaborate it for the use of general people. The Purāṇic literature contains many forms of worship, prayer, superstitions, mythologies, astrology, different schools of philosophy, geography, easy methods of attaining salvation and Heaven. Some of these facts can also be traced out in our Purāṇa where Parāśara himself admits that in this Purāṇa he has

narrated primary (*sarga*), and secondary (*pratisarga*) creation, the families of the patriarchs (*vaṁśa*) the periods of the *Manvantara* and the genealogical histories (*vaṁśānucharita*).[20] It may be further pointed out that the *Viṣṇu Puāṇa* also deals with geography,[21] *Varṇāśrama dharma*,[22] nakṣatra, rāśi and other subject-matters relating to astrology,[23] destruction,[24] easy methods of attaining *mokṣa*, etc. These topics are of common interest. In this way the Purāṇa contributes largely to the study of general culture. Furthermore, the Vedic literature does not show its sympathetic attitude towards women and the śūdras. But the Purāṇa, in general, has tried to raise the status of the śūdras and women. At one place we read in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[25] that women and śūdras are fortunate in the Kali age. Later on, we shall see in chapter III of the present work that our Purāṇa has taken a sympathetic attitude towards these two sections of society. Other Purāṇas also hold the same attitude to women and śūdras. The Devībhāgavata says, "Women, śūdras and the mean twice-born are not entitled to the vedas; it is only for their good that the Purāṇas have been written."[26] The Purāṇas have given attention to śudras and women of Hindu society.

It should be pointed out that in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Parāśara always refers to the sources through whom he could derive the particular portions. In the first *aṁśa* of the Purāṇa. Parāśara says about the story of the origin of Lakṣmi[27] that he heard this story from a ṛṣi named Mārichi.[28] Hence the whole story of the origin of Lakṣmī, as found in the Purāna, is not Parāśara's own imagination. The talk on *Yama Gītā*, made by Bhiṣma to Nakula, has been referred to in our Purāṇa.[29] The whole discourse about *varṇāśrama dharma*,[30] *śrāddha* ritual and *sadāchāra*, given by Aurva to King Sagara, has also been quoted in the Purāṇa. The story of Nagna[31] was at first related by Vaṣiṣṭha to Bhīṣma and then it was inserted in the Purāṇa by Parāśara. It is clear that a few portions of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* have been derived from other sources and Parāśara refers to these sources. In the present state of our knowledge it is difficult to trace the exact origin of these sources mentioned in the *Viṣnu Purāṇa*.

*Date of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa*

Let us deal with the problem of the date of the compilation of our Purāṇa. The problem of the fixing of the date of any Purāṇa is a very difficult task. No particular date or period can be assigned to any particular Purāṇa. Such is the case with the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* too, because it does not refer to the exact date of its compilation.

Scholars hold different opinions regarding the date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* Wilson,[32] on the basis of certain passages in the Purāṇa as referring to the Muhammadans, enunciated the view that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* was composed in or about A.D. 1045. His view is not free from doubts. He has misunderstood the passage. It is well-known that Alberuni[33] mentions the 18 Purāṇas. It appears that all Purāṇas, including the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* must have been in existence before Alberuni, *i.e.,* A.D. 1030. So the Purāṇa under consideration cannot be regarded as a work of such a late period.

Farquhar opines, "The *Harivaṁśa* clearly cannot be dated later than A.D. 400 and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is so like it in most of its features that it is probable that it belongs to the same general date."[34] Pargiter holds the view, "it is a late Purāṇa composed as a single whole upon a consistent plan and not a collection of materials of various times, as we find in the *Vāyu, Brahma* and the *Matsya.* From its account of Buddhism and Jainism it appears to have been composed after Brahmanism had recovered its supremacy, so that it cannot be earlier than about the fifth century A.D., and it is Brahmanical.[35] C.V. Vaidya endeavours to prove that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* cannot be regarded as earlier than the ninth century A.D. His view is based on the assumption that the Kailakila or Kainkila Yavanas, referred to in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* ruled over Andhra between A.D. 575 and 900, and were at the apex to their glory and power about A.D. 782.[39] Winternitz conjectures, "Pargiter may be right in thinking that it cannot be earlier thah the fifth century A.D. However, I do not think that it is much later."[37] P.C. Bagchi,[38] in his presidential address at the Indian History Congress, has opined that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* may be definitely placed before the 5th century A.D. V.R.R. Dikshitar holds that this Purāṇa must be contemporaneous with the *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā* but

it can be safely placed in the 6th or 5th century B.C. He further holds the view that there are at least four or five Purāṇas which existed some centuries before the Christian era and one of such Purāṇas is the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.*[39] He tries to fix the date with the help of the evidence of a Tamil work *Manimekhalai* roughly of the second century after Christ.[40] He takes the singnificant phrase *kadal vanan puranam odinan* (canto 27.11.98-99.) as a Purāṇa dedicated to *kaḍal vaṇan* which is simply an epithet of Viṣṇu (the god who has the colour of the sea). Thus he is of the opinion that this reference in the *Maṇimekhalai* is distinctly to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which was known to the author of the *Maṇimekhalai*. He also points out that for a Purāṇa to be popularised and expounded and that too in the Tamil land, it must have taken a considerable time after its composition was made. He thus traces the antiquity of this Purāṇa much earlier than the second century B.C.

All above views are only hypothetical. Farquhar, Bagchi and Winternitz are not ready to place the date of this Purāṇa before the fifth century A.D. Had it been composed in or after the fifth century A.D., the Purāṇa could have included the kings of the Gupta dynasty. But the Purāṇa does not include the kings of this dynasty. So the date of the Purāṇa cannot be fixed after the 5th century A.D. Pargiter's view that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* "cannot be earlier than the fifth century A.D." is based on the story of *Māyā Moha* found in the Purāṇa.[41] Hazra has tried to show that the chapters on the story of the *Māyā Moha* were most probably interpolated at a later date[42]. It is essential to examine the date of this portion. Hazra, after comparing the story of delusion found in the *Matsya Purāṇa* (24.43-49) with that of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* comes to the conclusion that it is probable that the story of *Māyā Moha* did not originate earlier than the A.D. 500.[43] He takes the story of *Māyā Moha* as spurious because the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* knows many incarnations of Viṣṇu including Kalki, but it is remarkably silent over the Buddha incarnation. So he thinks that the Buddha was not regarded as an incarnation at the time of the composition of the Purāṇa. But it may be pointed out that the story of the *Māyā Moha* cannot be taken as an interpolation and it cannot be placed

after the fifth century A.D. We should, therefore, critically examine Hazra's argument. Hazra, by comparing the *Matsya Purāṇa* with the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, opines that this story has been inserted as an interpolation in very late period. But the portion of the story of *Māyā Moha* cannot be taken as an interpolation as this story is found in several Purāṇas.[44] Hence, it is difficult to say as to which Purāṇa borrowed from whom. Furthermore, the *Māyā Moha* story does not refer to the Buddha as an incarnation but it only points out the existence of Buddhism on the Narmadā regions. This story further shows the decadance of Buddhism and the rise of Brahmanical religion. During the Sātavāhana-Kuṣāṇa[45] period, Buddhism was popular in the Narmadā region in the western part of India. But just after the Great Kuṣāṇas, there began a set-back in Buddhism. During the pre-Gupta age the brahmanical religion become more popular than Buddhism[45a]. It seems that the story of *Māyā Moha* might have been compiled after the Kusāṇa age when Buddhism was in decadance. It should also be pointed out that only to show the superiority of Vaiṣṇavism over Buddhism, such mythological stories have been inserted into the Purāṇic literature. Hence, on the basis of the story of *Māyā Moha*, the date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* cannot be necessarily fixed after the fifth century A.D.

C.V. Vaidya's opinion, about the date of the Purāṇa under review not earlier then the ninth century A.D., is also not above criticism. It may be pointed out that the date of the Kainkila Yavana is purely hypothetical and not yet proved. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[46] puts them before the rise of the Guptas. The Purāṇa is very conscious in describing the chronology of the royal dynasties. Then how these Yavanas can be placed in the ninth century A.D.? V.R.R. Dikshitar places the date of the Purāṇa in the 6th or fifth century B.C.; but we shall see later on that the antiquity of the Purāṇa cannot be fixed at such an earlier date. His hypothesis is that *kaḍal vaṇan* is simply an epithet of Viṣṇu. The Tamil work *Maṇimekhalai* does not refer to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* by its name. There are many Purāṇas which deal with God Viṣṇu. Without any definite reference to the Purāṇa in the *Maṇimekhalai*, it is very difficult to conjecture any opinion about the

date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* R.C. Hazra has tried to give an approximate date of the composition of the Purāṇa. He holds that the date of the composition of the Purāṇa falls between the end of the first and the middle of the fourth century A.D. He opines that it is highly probable that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* was finally written in the last quarter of the third or the first quarter of the fourth century A.D.[47] Much can be said in favour of his opinion.

For fixing the date of the Purāṇa, we shall have to take the help of the textual evidences of the Purāṇa and external evidence from other sources. At first we shall make an attempt to fix the lower limit of the age of the composition of the Purāṇa. Alberuni[48] refers to the eighteen Purāṇas including the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. He is well acquainted with the subject-matters of the Purāṇa. So it is clear that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* was compiled much earlier than the 11th century A.D. Many Nibandhas and commentaries,[49] dated between the 9th century and 12 century A.D., quote the verses of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. It further leads us to conclude that our Purāṇa was earlier than the 9th century A.D. By comparing the *Kūrma Purāṇa* with the *Viṣṇu*, Hazra shows that the latter is earlier than the former.[50] The *Kūrma Purāṇa* has been assigned to between A.D. 550 and 650[51]; then the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* cannot be dated later than the beginning of the seventh century A.D.[52] Hazra, again, by comparing the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* with the *Bhāgavata*, holds the view that the date of the former should be earlier than the date of the latter, *i.e.*, the sixth century A.D.[53]

On the basis of the internal evidences we can further push back the date of our Purāṇa. It is clear from the Purāṇa that the order of Nakṣatras begins with *Kṛttikā* and ends with *Bharaṇī*.[54] The old order of the Nakṣatra from *Kṛttikā* to *Bharaṇī* held the field before Varāhamihira (C. A.D. 550) in whose time order was changed into the new form from Aśvinī to Revatī. Therefore, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, which mentions the old-order, should be placed earlier than the fifth century, but not later.

The absence of the cult of Ganeśa (believed to have become prominent in the fifth century A.D.)[55] in our Purāṇa further leads us to the conclusion that it was compiled before the 5th century A.D. After a comparative study of the *Harivaṁśa* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,

Hazra has endeavoured to date the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* not later than the middle of the fourth century A.D.[56]

The lower limit of the age of the compilation of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* can be pushed back earlier. The Purāṇa[57] clearly refers to many historical dynasties upto the rise of the Guptas. The Guptas are mentioned as reigning over the country comprising Anu Gaṅgā, Prayāga, Gayā and Magadha.[58] Hence the Purāṇa refers to the early occupations of the Guptas. We cannot assign such a small kingdom, as mentioned in our Purāṇa, to the Imperial Guptas after Chandra Gupta I. Dasarath Sharma[59] has tried to show that the Purāṇa knows many Imperial Gupta kings. He has identified Devarakṣita with Chandra Gupta II, Mahendra with Kumāra Gupta, and Guha with Skanda Gupta. But these identifications do not seem to be convincing. We may point out that in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* Devarakṣita[60] is mentioned as a ruler of the area comprising Kośala, Oḍra, and Tāmralipta. But Chandra Gupta II ruled over a large empire.[61] His western boundaries are not mentioned in the Purāṇa. He was not a petty ruler like Devarakṣita of our Purāṇa. It is also clear from the study of Purāṇa that Mahendra is not the name of any person, but it is a place under Guha king. Mahendra is the region adjoining the eastern Ghats. So the identification of Kumāra Gupta with Mahendra is also not tenable. Guha king of our purāṇa is also a petty ruler, but Skanda Gupta ruled over a vast empire.[62] The Nāgas, Maṇidhānyaka, Devarakṣita, Guha, Kanaka and others have been referred to in the Purāṇa as petty rulers at the rise of the Guptas. Had this Purāṇa been composed after the downfall of the Gupta dynasty, it would have mentioned the Gupta kings by their names. But inspite of being a Vaiṣṇava work, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* omits the names of the Imperial Gupta kings who were also staunch Vaiṣṇavas. We may point out that the Nāgas and small kings in the Yamunā-Gangetic valley were the ruling powers before the rise of Samudra Gupta. Samudra Gupta defeated several Nāga kings and others.[63] But the Purāṇa takes no note of Samudra Gupta's conquests. Hence it is clear that the Purāṇa could not knowingly omit the names of the Gupta kings. It seems that the Gupta kings had not come into prominence at that time. It

appears that the account of the future kings in the Purāṇa only includes the kings before the rise of Chandra Gupta I, *i.e.*, A.D. 319. Thus, it is safe to conclude that the last and final redaction of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* must have taken place in the last quarter of the third century A.D. or the first quarter of the fourth century A.D., and not later.

It is equally a difficult task to fix the upper limit of the age of the composition of the Purāṇa. The Vedic literature is acquainted with the work "Purāṇa." The earliest reference to Purāṇa in the sense of literary composition is to be found in the *Atharvaveda*[64] where the Purāṇic literature is mentioned along with Rk, the Samana, the Metre and Yajus as produced from *uchchiṣṭa*. It is also associated with Itihāsa, Gāthā, and Narasamsi. This clearly shows that the Purāṇic literature existed in the age of the *Atharvaveda*. In the *Brāhmanas*[65], the Purāṇic literature is referred to in several places. In the *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*[66], the vedas are described as produced along with the Kalpa, Brāhmaṇa, Upaniṣad, Itihāsa and the Purāna. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[67] also mentions Purāṇa along with the vedas and other forms of literature. The Upaniṣads[68] also refer to the Purāṇic literature. In the Sūtra literature[69] clear and definite references are found to the Purāṇic literature. All these traditions are unanimous in their recognition of the sacredness of the "Purāṇa". But we do not find any reference to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* by its name. So it is clear that in the age of the vedas, the Purāṇa was regarded as one, and there was no bifurcation in the Purāṇic literature. It is also to be noted that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[70] refers to all vedas and their important schools in detail. But the vedic literature is silent over the name of any Purāṇa. Thus it is clear that our Purāṇa is later than the vedic literature.

Kauṭilya in his *Arthaśāstra*[71] mentions Purāṇa, Itihāsa and Vedas. The *Arthaśāstra* also refers to Purāṇa as necessary to set right a king who goes astray; it also refers to a Paurāṇik, whose functions were to recite Purāṇa to him but it does not mention any Purāṇa by name. It seems that the bifurcation of the Purāṇa had not begun in the 4th century B.C. But the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[72] refers to the *Arthaśāstra*. It is difficult to say whether the Purāṇa refers to Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* or any other work. We know that our Purāṇa[73] mentions Kauṭilya along

with king Chandra Gupta of the Maurya dynasty. Thus the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* appears to be later than the *Arthaśāstra*.

Though the theory of the existence of a single original Purāṇa is open to serious doubts, it can hardly be denied that more Purāṇas than one had come into existence long before the beginning of the Christian era. More definite information about the Purāṇic literature is obtained from the *Āpastamba Dh. S.*[74] where verses are quoted from a certain Purāṇa. In the Saṁhitās of Manu and Yājñavalkya,[75] the work "Purāṇa" has been used in the plural number; but the purāṇas by their names are not mentioned. In the Epics[76] several references occur to the Purāṇic literature. The *Mahābhārata* knows individual Purāṇas in some form or other at least at certain stages of growth. The Epic[77] literature indirectly refers to the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. It also mentions *Vāyu Prokta Purāṇa* (*i.e.*, *Vāyu Purāṇa* ) and *Matsyaka Purāṇa* (*i.e.*, *Matsya Purāṇa*) with some of their contents.[78] It can hardly be denied that these Purāṇic works in their forms were widely known at the time of the composition of the relevant portions of the *Mahābhārata*. The mention of individual Purāṇa by name in the *Mahābhārata* does not, however, mean that this work was familiar with the canon of "eighteen Purāṇas". The three verses of the *Svargārohaṇa parvam*[79] in which the "eighteen Purāṇas" have been mentioned, do not occur in all the editions and manuscripts of this work, and are, consequently, of very doubtful authenticity.[80] Thus it is clear that though more Purāṇas than one existed in the age of the Epic, the name of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is not mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*.

The evidences, found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, clearly show that the *Mahābhārata* is decidedly earlier than the Purāṇa. The Purāṇa shows its acquaintance with the stories and the personalities of the *Mahābhārata* such as Yudhiṣṭhira,[81] Bhīma,[82] Arjuna,[83] Nakula,[84] Sahadeva,,[85] Karṇa,[86] Duryodhana,[87] Kṛṣṇa,[88] Kuntī,[89] Dhṛtarāṣṭra,[90] Duḥśāsana,[91] etc. At one place in the Purāṇa,[92] Bhīṣma has been represented as an interlocutor. It also refers to the *Mahābhārata*[93] by its name and its compiler Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana.[94] Earlier this Epic was known as Bhārata. "Bhārata", according to Pāṇini,[95] signifies, "the battle of the Bharatas. In the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*[96] the two names

*Bhārata* and the *Mahābhārata* are similarly mentioned together. The *Bhārata* was the original work, about 24,000 stanzas of which were attributed to Vyāsa, and was preserved and popularized by the bards. The Bhṛgus, later expanded the *Bhārata* adding to it a considerable political, philosophical and religious matters and legends.[97] The epic itself explains the name as *Mahattvad Bhāravattvachcha Mahābhārata-muchyute*[98]—the work is called *Mahābhārata* on account of its greatness, enormity in size and weightiness, suggesting that it outweighs the veda and other sacred literatures of India. Another verse of the *Mahābhārata* says, "It is called *Mahābhārata* because in it is narrated the great life-history of Bhāratas."[99] Thus the reference to the *Mahābhārata* in our Purāṇa clearly shows that by that time this epic might have taken more or less its final shape. On a comparative study of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it appears that the former is earlier than the latter. In the great Epic,[100] Kṛṣṇa does not hold the position of supreme god, but he is simply a hero. It also does not refer to the exploits of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood in Gokula; but the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[101] devotes several chapters on Kṛṣṇa and his exploits in Gokula. Bhandarkar opines that Kṛṣṇa gained popularity in the Ist century A.D.[102] The stories of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood in Gokula were unknown till about the beginning of the Christian era.[103] On the basis of this fact it would not be illogical to hazard a conjecture that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* might have been composed in the first century A.D. and was later than the *Mahābhārata*. Regarding the date of the *Mahābhārata*, Hopkins[104] says, "the epic was practically completed about A.D. 200, that no date can be found to cover the entire epic, although, broadly speaking, it can be said to have existed in the second century B.C." We may conclude that the compilation of the Purāṇa would have begun at the time of the final completion of the *Mahābhārata*, most probably in the first century A.D.

We have observed earlier that more Purāṇa than one had come into existence in the beginning to Christian era. Because of the movement of the sectarian cult Viṣṇu, Śiva and other gods began to be recognised as sectarian gods in the beginning of the Christian era. The extant Purāṇas were revised during the first century of the

Christian era, where there was a revival of the ancient brahmanical religion, philosophy and literature after the onslaughts of Buddhism and Jainism had abated in their strength.[105] The beginning of the Christian era witnessed a great change in the religious life of India, and the cult of *Bhakti* became the pivot of Hinduism.[106] The worship of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and a few other deities became a prominent feature of religious life. And this cult of *Bhakti* could not fail to occupy its place in the Purāṇas, which was regarded as a common heritage. The worshippers and devotees of the various deities began to supplement the Purāṇic literature with the accounts of the glories of their particular deities resulting in the growth of this literature and giving it a sectarian and religious colour. Thus the Purāṇa appeared to be named after a particular deity. The same might have been the case with the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* We may presume that the compilation of this Purāṇa, because of the *Bhakti* movement, might have begun in the beginning of the Christian era.

There are sereval other evidences to show the beginning of the compilation of our Purāṇa in the first century A.D. The Purāṇa mentions the zodiacal signs (*Rāśis*) at various places. It shows that at the time of the compilation of the Purāṇa, these *Rāśis* were widely used in ancient society. Hazra believes that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* which is acquainted with the *Rāśis* and the *Horā,* was compiled not earlier than the end of the 1st century A.D.[107] Furthermore, the Purāṇa mentions the capture of Mathurā by Kāla Yavana.[108] The event of the capture of Mathurā by the Yavana ruler named Demetrius can be dated in the 2nd century B.C.[109] It may be presumed that the idea of composing the story relating to the event of the capture of Mathurā by the Yavanas must have been popular much later than the 2nd century B.C. On this basis our Purāṇa is later than the second century B.C.

The Purāṇa[110] under review refers to several foreign tribes, too, such as Śakas, the Yavanas, the Hūṇas, etc., who existed in India in the pre-Gupta age. The Śakas appeared to have ruled over a large part of western India before the Kuṣāṇas. The Purāṇa refers to the rule of 8 Yavanas after the Śakas. It is difficult to identify all these Yavana kings. More than eight Yavanas ruled over north-western

part of India in the 2nd century B.C. So the Purāṇa does not speak of these Indo-Bactrians. It may be suggested that eight Yavana kings of the Purāṇa might have been petty rulers in 2nd century A.D. The fourteen Turuṣkāras have also been mentioned to have ruled in India.[111] They may be identified with the Kuṣāṇas[112] as the Buddhist literature *Mañjuśrī Mulakalpa*, of course of a very late period, refers to the *Turuṣka* and *Mahāturuṣka* kings.[113] K.P. Jayaswal[114] holds the view that Kaniṣka was called a *Turuṣka* king where as Ruviska was *Mahaturuska*. Kalhaṇ's *Rājataraṅgiṇī*[115] seems to refer to the joint rule over Kasmira of three kings of Turuṣka tribe named Huṣka (probably Huviṣka), Juṣka (same as Vasiṣka), and Kaniṣka who founded respectively the cities of Huṣkapura (modern Ush Kur[116] in the Barmulla pass), Juṣkkapura (modern Zukur[117] on the north of Srinagar) and Kaniṣkapura (modern Kanispur[118] on the Barmulla-Srinagar road). Thus it appears that the Turuṣkāras are no other than the Kuṣāṇas. We may conclude that the foreign tribes, mentioned in the list of the future kings in the Purāṇa, ruled in India before the rise of the Guptas. It is also essential to point out that at another place, the Purāṇa refers to Hūṇas,[119] as a peace-loving people, but here they are not mentioned among the ruling tribes. It is generally believed that they invaded India during the time of Skanda Gupta.[120] But in the age of Kālidāsa,[121] the Hūṇas were living on the bank of the Oxus. So in the 4th century A.D. and even earlier they might have been a peace-loving people in the north-west of India.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* contains different material regarding social life, *i.e.*, the social rites, customs, caste system, *āśramas*, *saṁskāras*, etc. It also lays much emphasis on the observance of the rules of *varṇāśrama dharma*[122] and *saṁskāras*.[123] The Gṛhasthāśrama has been very much praised in the Purāṇa.[124] It is not unreasonable to believe that these chapters were introduced in the Purāṇa for reorganising the society. It is essential to note that the rise of Buddhism had given a blow to the *varṇāśrama dharma* and other brahmanical social institutions. But during the Śuṅga period the brahmanical religion and social oranisation again gained ascendancy, and the brāhmaṇas once again got the upper hand in society. It appears that the Purāṇa

depicts the social life of the society in need for reorganisation. Such condition existed only during and after the Śuṅga rule. We may, thus, presume the date of the composition of our Purāṇa as not earlier than the 1st century B.C.

We may further note that our Purāṇa also depicts the dark and dismal period of Hindu society. At one place, the Purāṇa, after describing the petty ruling dynasties along with the Guptas, describes the dark period of the society.[125] It appears that at the time of the beginning of the Gupta dynasty there was anarchy and confusion in the society. In the period between the Mauryas and the Guptas anarchy frequently prevailed. Mass lawlessness, riot, pillage and rape were wide spread.[126] Thus, it is clear that the Purāṇa, having the description of the dark aspect of society, was composed before the rise of the Guptas.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[127] like other Purāṇas,[128] gives the description of the Kali age in detail. It is unnecessary to quote all these passages, but it is clear that the Purāṇa depicts the unsettled condition of the society at the time of its composition. The fall of *varnāśrama dharma*,[129] rise of the Nagna and Pāṣaṇḍas,[130] the fall of vedic rites,[131] general degradation of people,[132] and the pitiable condition of women[133] can be marked in the Kali age. Now the question may arise regarding the real historical value of the chapters which refer to the Kali age. Though the description, contained in these chapters, may appear rather hyperbolical, we should not set them as historically worthless. The compiler of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, being a brāhmaṇa, describes the degradation of the brāhmaṇas on the one hand and the rise of the servile sudras on the other. These accounts should not be regarded totally false. The period, after the fall of the Kuṣāṇas upto the rise of the Gupta, is regarded as the dark period in Indian history.[134] During that period there was degradation in every phase of life. It appears that the Purāṇakāra describes the condition of that society. So it is highly probable that the whole Purāṇa might have been written in the pre-Gupta age.

The materials on religious life, as depicted in the Purāṇa, also help us in fixing the date of the text in the pre-Gupta age. We have

already seen that Kṛṣṇa's exploit in Gokula were written in the Purāṇa not earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. Again, the Purāṇa refers to the *Vyūha* theory. There are separate stories of Kṛṣṇa,[135] Sāṁkarṣaṇa,[136] Pradyumna,[137] Aniruddha[138] and Sāmba[139] in the Purāṇa. The concept of the Chaturvyūha appears to have been first formulated in the second century B.C. for Patañjali[140] seems to refer to it. The discovery of the *dhavja* of the *vyūha* Vasudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna at Besnagar[141] supports the prevalence of the vyūhavāda in the Ist century B.C. so these facts again lead us to presume that the Purāṇa might have been composed not earlier than 1st century.

The Purāṇa, in the chapters on the Nagnas and the Pāṣaṇḍas,[142] appears to be dead against the heretical sects. The Nagnas and Pāṣaṇḍas, the heretical sects, are against the brahmanical religion. We shall see later on that such people were the followers of Jainism and Buddhism.[143] The contempt, shown to these religious sects, could be possible when they were in a decadent state. There was a setback in Buddhism after the Great Kuṣāṇas. The description of the decadent state of these religious sects also leads us to suppose the lowest limit of the date of the Purāṇa not earlier than the second century A.D., but it may be even a bit later.

The Purāṇa is also acquainted with several *Avatāras*[144] of Viṣṇu, but it is silent over the incarnation of the Buddha. It gives details of the Varāha, Narasiṁha, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma incarnations, but it briefly refers to Matsya, Kūrma, Paraśurāma and Kalki incarnations. All incarnations, again, are not mentioned in the Purāṇa systematically. It shows that the idea of the incarnations had not reached its climax in the age of our Puraṇa. But the developed form of the ten incarnations can be marked in the Dasāvatāra cave temple of Udaygiri which was built during the age of Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta dynasty. Thus, it again helps us to fix the date of the final compilation of the Purāṇa earlier than the rise of Chandra Gupta II.

Thus, taking all materials of the Purāṇa, we may suggest, though tentatively, that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* was compiled between first century A.D. and early parts of the fourth century A.D.

## *Place of the Compilation of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa*

Parāśara, the compiler of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* does not throw any light on his whereabouts and the place where the Purāṇa was compiled. In such a condition it is very difficult to say about the place of the composition of the Purāṇa. The only source, which can throw light on this topic, is the textual evidences. We shall, therefore, try to point out the particular part of India where the Purāṇa was compiled. Important rivers, mountains, place and tribes of India have been mentioned in the Purāṇa.[145] Though the geographical section[146] of our Purāṇa refers to many rivers and mountains of India, this section does not help us to draw any conclusion, because the purpose of this section is to give a picture of the geography of India as a whole. Leaving aside this section, we find several references to many rivers of India; but the rivers of the northern India are larger in number than those of southern India. Only at one place the Narmadā[147] is mentioned. Other rivers of southern India, except in the geographical section, are not mentioned in the text. But the rivers of northern India, as found in the text, are the Gaṅgā,[148] the Yamunā,[149] the Vipāśā,[150] the Sarasvatī,[151] the Śatadrū[152] and the Gomatī.[153] An attentive reader of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* will not fail to mark that the author of the Purāṇa is well-aquainted with many rivers of northern India. The Purāṇakāra also attaches much religious values to the rivers of northern India. He devotes several passages to the origin of the Ganga.[154] He describes the glory of Gaṅgā[155] and the Yamunā.[156] He admits the fact that a bath in these rivers takes away all sins. But the Narmadā is not of such religious value in the Purāṇa. The Purāṇakāra only says that if one remembers the name of the Narmada, one has no fear of the poison of a snake.[157] The glory of the Narmadā as found in the other Purāṇas,[158] is not mentioned in our Purāṇa, Thus the above-mentioned facts naturally lead us to presume that the Purāṇakāra of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* shows his great love for the rivers of northern India. So his home-land might have been somewhere in the northern India.

Leaving aside the geographical section, there is no mention of any mountain of southern India in our Purāṇa. But there is a mention

of the mountains of northern India such as Govardhana[159] (near Mathurā in U.P.), Himālaya,[160] Kailāsa,[161] Arbuda,[162] (modern Mount Abu), Kolāhala[163] (modern Bandair[164] range south-west of Bundel Khanda). This shows the love of Purāṇakāra for the mountains of northern India only.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is also silent over the name of the tribes of southern India but it refers to several tribes[165] of northern India. There is only one reference to the *Dakṣiṇātya*[166] (*i.e.*, the people of South). Thus it indicates the special knowledge of Purāṇakāra about the northern Indian tribes. Besides these tribes, many towns[167] and *Janapadas*[168] of North India are found mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. But the Purāṇa does not speak of the cities and *Janapadas* of South India. We may also point out that towns of religious importance like Gaya,[169] Mathura,[170] Prabhāsa,[171] Dvāraka,[172] etc., have been mentioned in the Purāṇa. These towns have been glorified in it. Thus it is clear that Purāṇakāra is greatly interested in the towns and countries of North India.

It should also be pointed out that many stories, mentioned in our Purāṇa, have been associated with the places of North India. For examples, the performance of *tapa* of Dhruva near Mathurā,[173] the story of penance, performed by Kaṇḍu sage on the bank of the Gomati,[174] adventures of Kṛṣṇa[175] and Balarāma at Mathurā, Gokula, Hastināpura and Dvārakā. One will at once point out that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were born and brought up in North India; so the Purāṇakāra has associated such stories with the places of North India. But why is the Purāṇakāra silent over the adventures of Kṛṣṇa and of Balarāma in South India? Why stories, associated with the places of South India, are not mentioned in our Purāṇa? We read in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* that Kṛṣṇa visited many places of South India. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*[176] also describes Balarāma's pilgrimages to South India. In the same Purāṇa, the places and rivers, visited by Balarāma, mostly belong to South India. But the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is silent over the adventures of Balarāma in South India. The Purāṇakāra of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is well acquainted only with the adventures of Balarama and Kṛṣṇa in North India.

It should be mentioned further that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to words like *vimāna*[177] for the chariot of gods and *prāsāda*[178] for a palace. The word *vimana* for chariot and word *prāsāda*[179] for a palace are generally used in North India. In the South India the word *vimana* was used for houses or palaces.

A few other facts can also be mentioned here in support of our view. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[180] also deals with the future kings of India; but except for Āndhra dynasty,[181] almost all other dynasties are of North India. The Purāṇa is silent over the royal dynasties of South India. Hence it is conclusive enough to prove that the Purāṇakāra has got a wide knowledge of the North Indian royal dynasties rather than those of South India. All these facts taken together seem to suggest that this Purāṇa was composed in North India.

North India covers a large part of India. Now we shall try to locate some place in North India where the Purāṇa could have been compiled. Only the textual evidence of the Puraṇa is helpful to us in solving this problem. A careful study of our Purāṇa will show that the many of the tribes,[182] mentioned in the Purāṇa, can be located in the west of Prayāga, but a few can be located in the east of that place. Same is the case with towns. Most of the towns and rivers, which are in the west of Allahabad, are mentioned many times than those of of eastern India. This leads us to presume that the Purāṇa might have been composed somewhere in the west of Prayāga. We may further point out that in our Purāṇa, the Gangā[182] and the Yamunā have been more highly eulogised than any other river of India. It shows that a Purāṇakāra has got great love for the Gaṅgā. Thus we may presume that the home of the Purāṇakāra might have been near the Gaṅgā where the Purāṇa was composed. The Yamunā[184] has also been glorified by the Purāṇakāra. Mathurā[185] has also attracted the mind of the Purāṇakāra. We may tentatively assume that the place of the compilation of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* might have been somewhere in the Gaṅgā-Yamunā *doab*, not far away from Mathurā.

## REFERENCES


1. *Viṣ. P.* IV. Ch. 24.
2. *PRHRC.*, p. 19.
3. *Viṣ. P.* III. Chs. 8-16.
4. *Ibid.*, II. Ch. 6; VI. Ch. 5.
5. *Ibid.*, VI. Chs. 3-4.
6. *Ibid.*, III. Chs. 17-18.
7. *Ibid.*, VI. 8. 42-50.
8. *Kālaviveka* of Jīmutavāhana, pp. 340, 389, 390, 464, 493. *Smṛti-Chandrikā* of devaṇabhaṭṭa, II. p. 383, L. 11-12; p. 383, L. 17; p. 613, L. 16; IV. p. 36, LL. 2-12, p. 317. *Vīramitrodaya* (Paribhāsa Prakāśa), p. 83, LL. 7-8; p. 92, LL. 21-22; p. 160, LL. 2-3; p. 232, L. 5; p. 327, LL. 23-34. *Sanskāra Prakāśa*, p. 584, L. 7. *Madana Pārijāta*, p. 68, LL. 1-2; p. 117, L. 27; p. 118, L. 5; p. 204, LL. 9-10; p. 211, LL. 3-4; p. 212, p. 19; p. 333, LL. 9-10. *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi* of Hemādri, Vol. I, p. 41, LL. 5-6; Vol. III, pt. I, p. 15, LL. 21-22; p. 249, LL. 10-11; p. 549, LL. 4-5; p. 680, L. 6 etc.
9. *Viṣ. P.* I. 5. 1-26.
10. *Ibid.*, I. 5. 27.
11. *Ibid.*, I. 8. 15.
12. *Ibid.*, I. 8. 16
13. Cf. *Ibid.*, I. 8. 17.ff.
14. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 1.ff.
15. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 1.ff.
16. *Ibid.*, I. 10. 1.ff.
17. *Ibid.*, I. 15. 86.ff.
18. *Ibid.*, I. 15. 141.ff.
19. *Ibid.*, I. Chs. 17-20.
20. *Ibid.*, VI. 8. 1.
21. *Ibid.*, II: Chs. 2-4.
22. *Ibid.*, III. Chs. 8-16.
23. *Ibid.*, II. Chs. 7-12.
24. *Ibid.*, VI. Chs. 3-5.
25. *Ibid.*, VI. Ch. 2.
26. *Devībhagavava*, I. 3-21.
27. *Vis. P.* I. 9. 2-139.
28. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 1.
29. *Ibid.* III. 7. 8-38.
30. *Ibid.*, III. Chs. 8-16.
31. *Ibid.*, III. 16.7.
32. Wilson, *Viṣ. P.* (tr.), 1961. pp. lxix-lxx.
33. Alberuni's *India* (tr. Sachau) I, pp. 130, 131, 264.
34. *ORLI*, p. 143.
35. *AIHT.* p. 80.
36. *HMHI*, I (Poona, 1921), pp. 350.ff; *JBBRAS*, 1925, pp. 155.ff.
37. *HIL*, I, p. 545. fn. 2.
38. *PIHC*, 1943, p. 42.
39. *PI*, I, pp. xxvii.f.
40. *STLH.* pp. 73-76.
41. *Viṣ. P.* III. chs. 17, 18.
42. *PRHC.*, pp. 24.ff.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
44. *Mat.* 24.43-49; *Pad.* Śṛṣṭi. kh. Ch. 13; *Devībhāgavata*, IV, 13.
45. See *infra.* Ch. IV.
46. Cf. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.55.
47. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 24; *ABORI*, Vol. 18, pt. III. p. 269.
48. Alberuni, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 130, 131, 264.
49. Hazra, *op. cit.*, pp. 276.ff.
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 57.ff.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
54. *Vis. P.* II. 9. 16.
55. Getty, *Geneśa*, p. 10.

56. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
57. *Viṣ. P.* IV. Ch. 24.
58. *Ibid.*, IV. 24.63.
59. Sharma, *IHQ*, XXX, 1954, pp. 374.ff.
60. *Viṣ. P.* IV, 24.64.
61. Raychaudhari, *PHAI*, pp. 353.ff.
62. Raychaudhari, *op. cit.*, pp. 572.ff.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 534.ff.
64. *AV.* II. 40.42, XI. 7.24.
65. *Śat. Br.* XIII. 4.3.13; XI. 5.6.3; *Gop. Br.* I. 10.
66. *Gop. Br.* I. 10.
67. *Śat. Br.* XIV. 6.100.1.
68. *Jai. up.* I. 53; *Chh. up.* III. 4.1; III. 2.4.
69. *Sāṁkh. Gr. S.* I. 2.11; *Gaut. Dh. S.* I. 8.6.; *Ap. Dh. S.* I. 6.19.13.
70. *Viṣ. P.* III. 4.1.ff. (*Ṛgveda* and its school); III. 5.1.ff. (*Yajurveda* and its school); III. 6.1.8 (*Sāmaveda*); III. 6.9.ff. (*Atharvaveda*).
71. *Arth.* I. 3. 1-5.
72. *Viṣ. P.* III. 6.29.
73. *Ibid.*, IV.24. 26, 28.
74. *Āp. Dh. S.* I. 6.19.13; I. 10.29.7.
75. *Manu.* III. 232; *Yāj.* III. 189.
76. *Rāmā.* IV. 63.3; VI. 129.3; VII. 43.1; *Mbh.* I. 1.40; I. 5.2.
77. *Mbh.* I. 2.193; III. 191.35.
78. Mbh. III. 191.16; III. 187.56 (b)-57.
79. *Ibid.*, *Svarg.* 5.45 and 46; 6.97.
80. R.C. Hazra has dealt with the authenticity of these verses. See his book *PRHC*, pp. 2-3.
81. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 20.40.
82. *Ibid.*
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*, IV. 18. 28-29.
87. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.39.
88. *Ibid.*, Vth *Aṁśa.*
89. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.40.
90. *Ibid.*, IV. 20. 38,49.
91. *Ibid.*, IV. 20. 39.
92. *Ibid.*, III. 7. 8.ff.
93. *Ibid.*, III. 4. 5.
94. *Ibid.*, III. 4. 2,5.
95. *Pāṇ.* VI. 2. 38.
96. *Āśv Gr. S.* III. 4.
97. V.S. Sukthankar, *ABORI*, XVIII, pp. 15.ff.
98. *Mbh.* (Cr. Ed.) I. 1. 209.
99. *Ibid.*, I. 56. 31.
100. Hopkins, *GEI*, pp. 397.ff.
101. *Viṣ. P.* Vth *Aṁśa.*
102. Bhandarkar, *VSM*, pp. 34-35 cf. Majumdar, *AIU*, p. 438.
103. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
104. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 397-398.
105. Kane, *HDS*, I, p. 161.
106. See, *Purāṇa*, July 1960, p. 70.
107. Hazra, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.
108. *Viṣ. P.* V. Ch. 23.
109. Jayaswal, K.P., *JBORS*, XIV, pp. 127.ff.
110. Appen.
111. *Viṣ. P.* IV, 24.53.
112. Jayaswal, *IHI*, p. 24; *HI*, p. 44; Dowson, *C. Dic.*, p. 122; Burgess, *IA*, XIII, p. 58.
113. *MMK.* 569-571, 578, 586.
114. Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
115. *Rāj.* I. 168-173.
116. *AIU*, p. 148.
117. *Ibid.*
118. *Ibid.*
119. *Viṣ. P.* II. 3.17.
120. Fleet, Gupta Inscription, p. 56, Altekar, *VGA*, pp. 193.f.
121. Cf. *Raghu.* IV. 67.

122. *Viṣ. P.* I. Ch. 6; III. Ch. 8.
123. See *infra*, Ch. II.
124. *Viṣ. P.* III. Chs. 11, 12.
125. *Ibid.*, IV. 24. 70.ff.
126. Basham, *WWI*, p. 85.
127. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1. 10-60.
128. *Vā.* Ch. 58; *Bṇḍ.* II. 31; *Mat.* Ch. 144; *Kūr.* I.29.
129. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1. 10-11; 32-38.
130. *Ibid.*, VI. 1. 44-47.
131. *Ibid.*, VI. I. 39.
132. *Ibid.*, VI. 1. 24-27, 55-60.
133. *Ibid.*, VI. 1. 16-18, 28-31.
134. Smith, *EHI*, p. 292.
135. *Viṣ. P.* Vth *Aṁśa.*
136. *Ibid.*, V. 6.8.ff; 8.8.ff; 9.12.ff; Ch. 25.
137. *Ibid.*, V. 27.1.ff; V. 26.12.
138. *Ibid.*, V. 32.22.ff; V. 33.52.
139. *Ibid.*, V. 35.1.ff.
140. *Mahā.* on *Pān.* VI. 3.5.
141. Banerjee, *DHI*, pp. 101.ff.
142. *Viṣ. P.* III. Chs. 17, 18.
143. See *infra*, Ch. IV.
144. See *infra*, Ch. IV.
145. *Viṣ. P.* II. 3.1.ff; See *infra*, Appen.
146. *Ibid.*, II. Ch. 3.
147. Cf. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.7.ff.
148. *Ibid.*, III. 14. 18; II. 8. 110.ff.
149. *Ibid.*, III. 14. 18; VI. 8.31.ff.
150. *Ibid.*, III. 14.18.
151. *Ibid.*
152. *Ibid.*
153. *Ibid.*
154. *Ibid.*, II. 8.110.ff.
155. *Ibid.*, II. 8.118.ff.
156. *Ibid.*, VI. 8.31.ff.
157. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.12-13.
158. *Mat.* Ch. 193; Dikshitar, *PI*, II. pp. 210-211.
159. *Viṣ. P.* V. Ch. 11; V. 10. 38-41, 44-49.
160. *Ibid.*, I. 22.8; II. 13.33.
161. *Ibid.*, I. 9.9; II. 2.41; II. 5.17.
162. *Ibid.*, II. 3.16.
163. *Ibid.* III. 18.72.
164. *JRAS*, 1914, p. 290; N.L.De, *IG*, p. 102.
165. *Viṣ. P.* II. 3. 15-17.
166. *Ibid.*, II. 3.16.
167. See, *infra*, Appen.
168. See, *infra*, Appen.
169. *Viṣ. P.* III. 16.4.18.
170. *Ibid.*, I. 12.2-4; IV. 4.101; V. 23.4.ff.
171. *Ibid.*, V. 21.25; V. 37. 30, 38.
172. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.91; IV. 2.1; IV. 13.19,48; V. 23. 13-14.
173. *Ibid.*, I. 12. 1-5.
174. *Ibid.*, I. 15.11.ff.
175. *Ibid.*, Vth *Aṃśa.*
176. *Bhāg*, X. 79.13.ff.
177. *Viṣ. P.* I. 12.94; V. 37.74.
178. *Ibid.*, II. 5.3; I. 19.10,11.
179. T.P. Bhattacharya, *HVV*, p. 276.
180. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24. 1-69.
181. *Ibid.*, IV. 24. 43-50.
182. See, *infra*, Appen.
183. *Viṣ. P.* II. 8.110.ff.
184. *Ibid.*, VI. 8.31.ff.
185. *Ibid.*

Chapter III

# Social Life

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, replete with some interesting information regarding different aspects of social life of its contemporary periods, unfolds the details as division of society into groups, *āśrama* system, *saṁskāra*, family, food, dress, ornaments and other miscellaneous aspects.

*Varṇāśrama*

The rigidity of the *varṇāśrama dharma* was not there in the early vedic period and the four castes, the brāhmaṇa, the rājanya, the vaiśya and the śūdra existed as class divisions. There was no clear-cut distinction among the three higher varṇas; the marked difference existed only between the Āryas and the Dāsa or the Dasyu. But gradually new ideas developed in society. Flexibility of the social institution slowly gave way to rigidity; professions became hereditary, and varṇa consciousness found room in society. During the age of the Brāhmaṇa literature, the idea of four varṇas was so attached to the social mind that even gods were regarded as being divided into these four varṇas[1] The Buddhist literature appears to be dead against the caste system.[2] But the *Arthaśāstra* highly advocates the rules and regulations of the caste-system.

In the age of our Purāṇa, this system remained very popular in society. The rules and regulations of the four caste system were fully developed. The Purāṇa gives the highest place of honour to brāhmaṇas. The next in the rung of ladder were kṣatriyas who also enjoyed high honour. The vaiśyas were in third grade and the śūdras in the fourth. The despised castes, the chaṇḍālas, etc., occupied the lowest rank in

society. This shows the prevalence of gradation in the caste system, and such gradation existed even in early period also.

The feeling of caste superiority was also intense. The Brāhmaṇas considered themselves superior to all the three varṇas; and in following pages we shall see that several privileges were given to them. This is not all. Certain groups within the same caste considered themselves higher than others. The brāhmaṇas[3] such as *Triṇāchiketa, Trimadhu Trisuparṇa*, devoted to the vedic studies, were regarded as higher than other brāhmaṇas. The rest of the castes, as a general rule, regarded the brāhmaṇa as superior to themselves.

The caste consciousness in the society, was so high that the brāhmaṇas did not like to be invited along with others[4] such as seller of soma (*somkviarayī*), village-priests (*grāma-yājakaḥ*), teachers who took remuneration for imparting education (*bhṛtakādhyāpaka*), *vṛṣaśisūtipoṣṭā, vṛṣalīpati* and *devalaka*.

In the Purāṇa, emphasis has been given on the purity of lineage; and hence, endogamy was normal. However inter-caste marriage often took place in the age of our Purāṇa. This problem is discussed in the section dealing with marriage.

Due to caste system, the idea of inter-dinning was not highly favoured in society. The Purāṇa seems to be against dinning with those who were anti-vedas.[5] Several people[6] such as sellers of daughter (*kanyādūṣayitā*), *somavikrayī*, and *grāmayājaka* (village-priest), *devalaka*, etc., were not invited to *śrāddha* ceremony to dine with the learned brāhmaṇas. But inter-dinning was not totally banned in society as it is clear from other sources. Āpastamba allows śūdra cooks in brāhmanas kitchen, provided they are supervised by a member of the three higher castes, and observe certain hygienic rules,[7] moreover in distress, food from any caste could be accepted.

Though the Purāṇa always the advises the four varṇas to follow their own duties, sometimes even *dvijas* did not follow the rules of *varṇa* system. We shall see later on that there are numerous references to the inter-caste marriages between the brāhmaṇas and the kṣatriyas. Another fact is to be mentioned here that the chānge of the caste was

also prevalent in the age of our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa mentions that Pṛṣadhra, the son of Manu, became a śūdra because he had killed a cow of his teacher.[8] Triśaṁku[9] is said to have become a chaṇḍāla. Trayyāruṇi, and others, who were kṣatriyas became brāhmaṇas.[10] This is not a new thing as we have a few examples of change of the caste in other literary sources.[11] The *Mahābhārata*[12] records the story of Visvāmitra, a kṣatriya, becoming a brāhmaṇa by dint of his efforts. The story of Paraśurāma,[13] a brāhmaṇa who become a kṣatriya by profession, is too well known to be related here. There are other notabilities in the *Mahābhārata*, who were brahmanas by birth, but were kṣatriyas by deeds. Two kṣatriya princes, Devāpi and Sindhu Dvīpa attained brāhmaṇhood.[14] However, such examples are very rare and people in general stuck to their own castes.

Though the caste system was very popular in society, it was highly criticised by some peoples. The *Pāṣaṇḍas*, *Nagnas* and the anti-vedic people, as we shall see in succeeding pages, raised a protest against the caste system in general and the brāhmaṇa in particular. In spite of severe criticism caste system remained unshaken.

### *The Brāhṃaṇas*

The Purāṇa gives two pictures of the condition of brāhmaṇas in the contemporary society. The passages, devoted to the description of the Kali age,[15] depict the degenerate condition of brāhmaṇas and other castes also. But the Purāṇa generally refers to the exalted position of the brāhmaṇa, and describes them as ideal. One may take these two descriptions as self-contradictory. When compared, the two descriptions do not show contradiction, because there lived in society ideal as well as ordinary brāhmaṇas who cared very little for the rules and regulations assigned to them by the Dharmaśāstras. Thus both descriptions taken together give a vivid picture of the condition of the brāhmaṇas, as they existed in the period under review.

The master-mind of our Purāṇakāra did not fail to observe minutely the condition of the brāhmaṇas and of other castes as well. The Purāṇa discloses the distinct categories of the brāhmaṇas as prevalent in society. Some categories of ṛṣis,[16] *i.e.*, *saptarṣi*, *brahmarṣi*,

*devarṣi*, and *rājarṣi*, existed in that period. But the Purāṇa does not explain these terms. We read here that once Brahmā created mind-born sons, *i.e.*, Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Aṅgiras, Marīchi, Dakṣa, Atri and Vasiṣṭha. They are also called nine Brahmās, most probably *maharṣis*. Among the above mentioned sages Marīchi, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Ṛtu, and Vasiṣṭha became saptarṣis.[17] The *Mahābhārata*[18] also re-cognises these sages as saptarṣis. The Purāṇa further refers to different *saptarṣis* in each *manvantara*;[19] but the same group of *saptarṣis* did not exist in all *manvantaras*.

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* ordains that those, who see Brahmā, are called *brahmarṣis*. They are superior to *devarṣis* and *rājarṣis*, and their ultimate goal is Brahmā-loka.[20] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to some *brahmarṣis* who were well-versed in the vedas, learned, and had heavenly power. Parāśara the interlocutor of the Purāṇa, is himself a *brahmarṣi*.[21] Durvāsā had also the knowledge of Brahmā.[22] Sage Saubhari was also a *brahmarṣi*.[23]

The *devarṣis*, according to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, are those who see Devas and their ultimate goal is Devaloka.[24] But the names of *devarṣis* are not mentioned in our Purāṇa. Another category of ṛṣi, mentioned in the Purāṇa, is *rājarṣi*. Yayāti,[25] Śaśāda,[26] Ṛtuparṇa,[27] Janaka,[28] Jahnu,[29] etc. are mentioned as *rājarṣis*. *Rājarṣis*, according to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, are those, who "see" their people through their (people's) happiness and their ultimate goal is Indra-loka.[30] The above mentioned sages had got some supernatural powers, and they were engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, and devoted their life to *tapa*.

The main duty of the brāhmaṇas was to study (*svādhyāya*).[31] They are described in the Purāṇa as well-grounded in the vedas and well-versed in the various branches of learning. The references[32] to *triṇachiketa, trimadhu, trisuparṇa, jeṣṭhasāmaga, śrotriya*, etc. indicate the prevalence of the study of different vedas by brāhmaṇas in society and they possessed vast learning. Other authorities[33] also assign the duty of the vedic study to the brāhmaṇas, and it is not a new thing in our Purāṇa.

The brāhmaṇas not only studied the vedas, but imparted education to others.[34] It is stated in the Purāṇa that when Vyāsa was enjoined by Brahmā to arrange the vedas in different books, he took four persons, well-read in those works, as his disciples. He appointed Paila reader of the *Rik*, Vaiśampāyana of the Yajuṣ, and Jaimini of the Sāma-veda, and Sumantu, who was conversant with the *Atharva veda*, was also a disciple of the learned Vyāsa.[35] It is evident from other sources also that the brāhmaṇas were imparting the vedic knowledge in society from the very ancient time. The vedic literature[36] contains numerous examples of the brāhmaṇas who imparted vedic education in society. We also find references to the brāhmaṇas in the Buddhist literature[37] as well-versed in various branches of knowledge.

Some brāhmaṇas were imparting education for livelihood. The Purāṇa appears to be dead against *bhṛtakādhyāpaka* (*i.e.*, teachers who take remuneration for imparting education) and they were not to be invited in the *śrāddha* ceremony.[38] Such teachers were condemned by Kālidasa[39] also. Thus it seems that taking remuneration for imparting education was not appreciated in society. Teachers had right to get only *gurudakṣiṇā* from the disciples at the end of the letter's education. The Purāṇa advises *brahmachārīs* to pay *gurudakṣiṇā* to teachers after completing their education.[40] We shall see later on that though *gurudakṣiṇā* was prevalent in society since long time, it was not enough for teachers.

Brāhmaṇas acted as priests in sacrifices since the vedic age[41] and also thereafter.[42] Even in the age of our Purāṇa, the brāhmaṇas held the honourable position of priests in sacrifices. There are several references in the Purāṇa about them working as priests in sacrifices.[43] So conducting sacrifices was another means of their livelihood.[44] Sacrifices were a means of profit for them as they used to get *dakṣiṇā* which included various objects such as cows, beds, garments, etc.[45] It is to be mentioned here that sacrifices were not as profitable to the brāhmaṇas as they were in the vedic age. The vedic sacrifices were not so popular in later periods. They were very elaborate and the priests had to devote long time. But the priests could have hardly got much

money. Hazra opines, "Even before the period of the Brāhmaṇas, the elaborate speculation of the priests began to cause a gradual increase in the number and intricacy of the vedic rites and rituals on the one hand, and the Smṛti rules on the other. The growing mass of these engaged not only more time but also required more energy and expense. Yet the income of the Brāhmaṇas does not seem to have inereased in the same proportion, but appears rather to have decreased.[46]

There were some people who preached against Brāhmaṇism, sacrifices,[47] and funeral rites.[48] They believed in the principle of non-violence,[49] disregarded the vedic literature[50] and the brāhmaṇas.[51] So they might have affected the economic condition and social position of the brāhmaṇas. The popularity of the doctrine of *ahiṁsā* was the main cause of the unpopularity of the vedic sacrifices which were main sources of income to the priests.

The acceptance of gifts had been another means of livelihood of the brāhmaṇas since the vedic age[52] and thereafter.[53] It also continued in our period.[54] We have seen in the preceding pages that the prevalence of anti-Brāhmaṇism was a blow to the livelihood of the brāhmaṇas. The Purāṇkāra, being a brāhmaṇa, was aware of anti-Brāhmaṇism, and hence he adopted various means for popularising *dāna* in society. He tried to add religious colour to gifts. It is mentioned in the Purāṇa that those, who do not give donations, are not devotees of God Viṣṇu.[55] It was believed that gifts were given to the brāhmaṇas for the *pitṛgaṇa* of the giver. In order to attach importance to the donation, the Purāṇa says that the ancestors always sing, "That enlightened individual who begrudges not his wealth, but presents us with cakes, shall be born in a distinguished family. Prosperous and affluent shall than man ever be, who in honour of us gives to the brāhmaṇas, if he is wealthy, jewels, clothes, land, conveyance, wealth, or any valuable presents, or who, with faith and humility entertains them with food, according to his means, at proper season......."[56] It seems that such merits of gifts, made to brāhmaṇas are extolled with a view to attract the attention of the people.

Provision was made to donate several things to brāhmaṇas. The Purāṇa speaks of the donation of cow,[57] jewels, clothes, land, conveyances, wealth, or any valuable presents.[58] The *Matsya Purāṇa*,[59] too, gives a long list of the articles for donation. It shows that brāhmaṇas were ready to accept several things in donation.

The Purāṇa has made an attempt to popularise gifts. It assigns a hell to those who do not make gifts to the brāhmaṇas,[60] and miserly habit in making gift is condemned. Other Purāṇas,[61] too, repeatedly condemn this habit, probably because it appears to be againgst the interests of the brāhmaṇas. The *Brahma Purāṇa* (ch. 215) depicts the horrible picture of tortures of hell inflicted on those who do not make donation.

Only to lay emphasis on gifts the Purāṇa refers to the donations made by kings[62] and rich people. But some other Purāṇas go further by narrating fictitious stories of kings and others who made gifts to brāhmaṇas. The *Matsya Purāṇa*[63] refers to many kings who are said to have made donations with the result that they were all protected by the divine beings. There is also a story of the prostitute Līlāvatī and the śūdra goldsmith who, by making donations, got better life in next birth.[64]

The study of our Purāṇa also shows that brāhmaṇas adopted every possible means to take gifts from all castes. The three higher castes[65] had a duty to make gifts to brāhmaṇas. The Purāṇa advises even a śūdra[66] to make gift to them. The brāhmaṇas accepted donation even from foreigners as we find in the contemporary inscription of Nasik cave of the time of Nahapāna.[67] The Karle cave inscription[68] of Uṣabhadatta also refers to the donation made by a Śaka king to the brāhmaṇas. The Kuṣāṇas[69] also donated several valuable articles to the brāhmaṇas. Thus it becomes clear that in practice the brāhmaṇas did not reject the gifts made to them by the fallen members of the four castes, and even by foreigners.

The brāhmaṇas appear in the Purāṇa as accepting donation on several occasions such as at the time of *śrāddha*,[70] *jātakarma*,[71] etc. They accepted it at the time of sacrifices[72] also. A long list of various

occasions for making gifts to the brāhmaṇas can be found in the *Matsya Purāṇa*[73] too.

Our Purāṇa advises the people to make gift to the noble and qualified brāhmaṇas[74] only. Such idea can also be marked in the *Kūrma Purāṇa* which says, "A man should feed a pious and learned brāhmaṇa even if the latter has already got a full meal, but never an illiterate and undutiful one who has been fasting for ten nights."[75] The Smṛti[76] literature too speaks of giving donation to the qualified brāhmaṇas.

Due to the changing circumstances and under the pressure of social and economic necessities many of the brāhmaṇas could not stick to their hereditary profession of teaching and priesthood. The voluntary gifts would not have been very helpful to meet their economic necessities. The brāhmaṇa Purāṇakāra of our Purāṇa appears to have been quite aware of the changing needs of society, and, hence, he permitted a brāhmaṇa to follow other professions for the sake of livelihood. According to the Purāṇa, the professions of a kṣatriya and of vaiśya are to be followed by a brāhmaṇa in times of distress.[77] Gautama,[78] too, corroborates this fact by ordaining that a brāhmaṇa in distress should follow the profession of a kṣatriya or of a vaiśya. It appears that the brāhmaṇas made some provisions to maintain themselves in times of distress.

There were many brāhmaṇs in the period of our Purāṇa who followed other means of livelihood. The Purāṇa refers to the brāhmaṇas[79] as vendors of soma, village-priests, teachers accepting remuneration for teaching, *devalaka* (a brāhmaṇa who ministers to idol) and physician.[80] It is clear from the Buddhist literature[81] also that brāhmaṇas even in the ordinary walk of life followed several professions.

The brāhmaṇas often took active part in administration in the age of our Purāṇa. They, being priests, always helped kings in the administration. We are told in a story that Hiraṇyakaśipu, a Daitya king, always consulted his priests.[82] On the advice of Vasiṣṭha, Sudyumna was appointed as a king of Pratiṣṭhāna.[83] The priests of

king Santanu[84] advised him in running the administration. The Purāṇa is aware of those brāhmaṇas, who exchanged the sacrificial ladle for the sword. It knows the brāhmaṇa rulers of the Śuṅga[85] and of the Kaṇva[86] dynasties who ruled for a long time. It appears that they were very ambitious brāhmaṇa families who made their way to the throne. Some brāhmaṇas took part in dethroning or coronating the kings. It is mentioned in Purāṇa that some brāhmaṇas, raising their heads against the tyranny of king Vena, killed the latter[87] and coronated his son Pṛthu.[88]

A close study of the Purāṇa under review reveals that brāhmaṇas were anxious to maintain their social position also. They realised it very well that with the establishment of the *varṇāśrama dharma* and the authority of the Vedas, they would be revered in society. As we shall see in succeeding pages that brāhmaṇas endeavoured very hard to maintain the *varṇāśrama dharma*. Furthermore, the Purāṇa always preaches the worship[89] of and respect to brāhmaṇas. It also lays emphasis on rendering service to brāhmaṇas.[90] The references to the worship of brāhmaṇas can be also traced in the *Varāha Purāṇa*[91] too.

The brāhmaṇas of the Purāṇa took other means to display their sanctity in the society. They associated themselves with the Kalki incarnation in the Purāṇa.[92] Even in the other Purāṇa also, the brāhmaṇas are called the visible gods of the earth, and are identified with Viṣṇu or other deities.[93] The Purāṇa under consideration also fabricates several story of brāhmaṇas who possessed miraculous power of favour and of curse. As for example, we read in the Purāṇa that once Durvāsā ṛṣi presented a garland to Indra, but anyhow the garland fell on the earth. Then the sage became angry and cursed Indra for the destruction of the latter.[94] In another story it is stated that once sage Saubhari wanted to marry the daughters of king Māndhātā, who could not disagree for the fear of being cursed by the sage.[95] One of the intentions underlying such stories is to upgrade the position of the brāhmaṇas in society by making the people believe in the fierceness of their curse. Such stories also show that the brāhmaṇas could do immense good when they became pleased. In the story

of Indra and Durvāsā, not only of men, even gods and divine are shown under the control of the brahmanical power.[96]

Like other Dharma śāstras,[97] our Purāṇa[98] denounces the act of killing a brāhmaṇa (*brahma-hatyā*). It is regarded as a great sin, and a hell has been assigned to the sinner.[99] The Purāṇa not only denounces *brahma-hatyā*, but it condemns even the act of hating a brāhmaṇa.[100] The high status of the brāhmaṇas in society can be marked by fact that the period of mourning[101] (*asaucha*) for them was only ten days which it was longer for others. The Smṛti literature[102] also contains similar provision regarding the mourning period for the brāhmaṇas. The foregoing discussion shows that the brāhmaṇas held the honourable position and they enjoyed several social, economic and religious privileges in the age of our Purāṇa.

*The Kṣatriyas*

They occupied second position in Hindu society. In several passages our Purāṇa refers to the term "kṣatra."[103] Commentator Mallinātha takes this term in the sense of kṣatriya caste.[104] The Purāṇa also appears to have used it in the same sense. The term *kṣatriya* is also mentioned in the Purāṇa. The word *rājanya*[105] seems to be the substitute of kṣatriya.

Main duties of a kṣatriya were to give presents to brāhmaṇas, perform various sacrifices and study the scriptures.[106] The Purāṇa says, "His special sources of maintenance are arms and the protection of the earth. The guardianship of the earth is indeed his especial province : by the discharge of this duty a king attains to his objects, and realises a share of the merit of all sacrificial rites. By intimidating the bad, and cherishing the good, the monarch, who maintains the discipline of the different castes, secures whatever region he desires.[107] They actually followed their own profession. Several kings, mentioned in the Purāṇa, made donations[108] to the brāhmaṇas, and performed several sacrifices.[109] They also protected the people and earth from their enemies. It is obvious from the Purāṇa that kings like Yayṇti,[110] Sagara[111] and others protected the earth by defeating their enemies. Other brahmanical sources[112] also assign same duties to the kṣatriyas.

Like the Smṛti literature,[113] our Purāṇa[114] advises a kṣatriya, in the time of distress, to adopt the means of livelihood of a vaiśya but he should never descend to the function of the śūdras.

Other important features of this caste, as found in the Purāṇa, are to be noted here. They are mentioned as intellectuals who devoted their time for seeking knowledge. For examples Dhruva, the son of king Uttānapāda, attained to highest goal by gaining ultimate knowledge through hard penance.[115] King Priyavarta's three sons, *i.e.*, Medha, Agnibāhu and Putra, were well-versed in yoga, and they did not pay their attention to administration.[116] King Bharata, having coronated his son, went to Śālagrāma to practise penance and yoga.[117] Kṛtadhvaja[118] and Keśidhvaja[119] were well-versed in the *Adhyātma* Śāstra. Several kings like Manu,[120] Agnīghra,[121] Ṛṣabhadeva,[122] etc. went to forests for practising penances. All these instances indicate that the Kṣatriyas were not only paying their attention to their traditional profession, but were anxious to acquire various knowledge as well.

The vedic education of a kṣatriya was not neglected in the age of our Purāṇa. Purukutsa, Seunaka, Kṛta, Śatānīka, and several other kings are mentioned as having received vedic education. We are told that after *upanayana saṁskāra*, king Sagara got the education of several śāstras in the āśrama of sage Aurva.[123] Dhanvantari, who was well-versed in the vedas, divided the *Ayurveda* in eight divisions.[124] Satānīka got his vedic education from Yājñavalkya.[125] We read in the Purāṇa that king Purukutsa was well-versed in the vedic knowledge.[126] It must be mentioned here that the kṣatriyas had been getting their education since the vedic age.[127] The Buddhist literature also refer to the several princes who, like the brāhmaṇa youths, devoted certain period of their life to religious studies.[128] Kauṭilya[129] advises princes to be well-versed in the vedas and several sciences. It appears that some kṣatriyas, giving up their sword, devoted their time to the pursuit of the vedic knowledge.

The relation between kṣatriyas and brāhmaṇas, in the age of our Purāṇa, must be marked here. These two higher castes were living peacefully in society, and their relation was cordial. The *Viṣṇu*

*Purāṇa*[130] is full of the references to the marriages between these two castes. The existence of the *niyoga* system also indicates the cordial relation between these two castes. In this custom, the brāhmaṇas were usually appointed to raise issue on kṣatriya women in ancient periods.[131]

But some instances show that sometimes there was struggle between them. We know from the Purāṇa that some sages, becoming disgusted with the tyrannical rule of king Vena, revolted against him.[132] Once Vasiṣṭha cursed king Nimi because the latter had appointed Gautama as a priest in place of the former. King Nimi also cursed his priest.[133] Paraśurāma is said to have destroyed the kṣatriyas several times.[134] It appears from the foregoing discussion that sometimes the brāhmaṇas came into conflict with the kṣatriyas, but the relations between these castes were on the whole cordial.

*The Vaiśyas*

The Vaiśyas were regarded as the third caste in Hindu society. We do not get much details regarding this caste in our Purāṇa. Their main professions, according to the Purāṇa, are cattle-breeding (*paśu-pālya*), trade (*vāṇijya*) and agriculture (*kṛṣi*).[135] Other brahmanical sources[136] also hold the same view about the means of livelihood of the vaiśyas. It appears that their main sources of income for maintenance were agriculture, trade and cattle-rearing. But sometimes they followed the profession of a śūdra. We are told in the Purāṇa that in the Kali age, the vaiśya will abandon agriculture and commerce, and gain a livelihood by servitude or the exercise of mechanical arts.[137] It indicates that there were some vaiśyas who followed the profession of mechanical arts which was meant for the śūdras.

On the basis of the professions assigned to vaiśyas, it may be suggested that the traders, merchants, agriculturists, cattle-breeders were included in this caste. The Purāṇa,[138] in one place, mentions that agriculture is for agriculturists, trade for merchants, and cattle-rearing for Gopalas. Thus it appears that sub-groups among the

vaiśyas were fully developed in that age. The sub-caste consciousness was also prevalent in the society. It may be suggested that the vaiśyas were never a homogeneous group. Even in the Gupta age[139], the vaiśya caste included various sub-castes like agriculturists, the merchants, the cattle-rearers, the smiths, the carpenters, etc. They were more conscious of their own sub-groups than of their being members of the theoretical vaiśya varṇa.[140]

Some references in the Purāṇa show that the vaiśyas did not always follow their traditional professions, but sometimes they became kings to run the administration. We are told in the Purāṇa that the Gupta king will rule over the territories comprising Prayāga, Gaṅgā, and Magadha.[141] It is believed that the Guptas belonged to the vaiśya caste.[142] Our Purāṇa also supports this contention by assigning the title of Gupta to the vaiśya-caste.[143]

The vaiśyas were enjoying some religious facilities. According to the Purāṇa,[144] they were entitled to make gifts, to study scriptures and to perform sacrifices. Kauṭilya[145] and Manu[146] also hold the same view. In society the life of a vaiśya was valuable, as the Purāṇa prescribes a hell to the murderer of this caste.[147] The period of impurity for them lasted for only 15 days,[148] while for a śūdra it was for a month. The discussion, mentioned above, shows that the vaiśyas enjoyed several privileges in society. They were the richest people, and were the producing class.

### *The Śūdras*

The śūdras were regarded as the fourth and last caste of Hindu society in ancient India. The close study of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* reveals that among the category of the śūdra there seems to be a number of sub-castes. The status of the low castes makes it quite clear that they were none, but the śūdras. The circle of the śūdras was very large. Our Purāṇa contains references to several artisans and mechanist, such as *varddhakī*[149] (carpenter), *Kullāla*[150] (potter), *aurabhrika*[151] (shepherd), *tailapīḍā*[152] (oil-monger), *kaivarta*[153] (fishermen), *rajaka*[154] (washerman), etc. These craftsmen and artisans were prevalent in society. As we

shall presently see that the śūdras followed the prefession of crafts and artisan. So the craftsmen and artisans must have been included in the śūdra varṇa. They were included in this varṇa even in the Buddhist age.[155] Gautama also informs us that the śūdra could live by practising mechanical arts.[156] It has been suggested that sanctions of the śūdra community worked as weavers, wood-workers, smiths, leather-dressers, potters, painters, etc.[157]

Other castes, following the profession of the śūdras, are also included in śūdra varṇa by the Purāṇa. The Purāṇa says that in the Kali age the vaiśyas will give up trade and agriculture, and earn their livelihood by servitude or the exercise of mechanical arts[158] and all castes, will become like the śūdras.[159] Hence it appears that other castes, not following their own traditional professions, were regarded as the śūdras. The Purāṇa regards such persons as śūdras who do not follow the rules and regulations of brāhmaṇical religion. The heretics[160] and non-believers of the Vedas were also considered to be śūdras in the age of our Purāṇa.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* represents, a true picture of the status of śūdras in its contemporary time. It informs us that in the Kali age śūdras, seeking a subsistence by begging, and assuming the outward marks of religious mendicants, will become the impure followers of impious and heretical doctrine (*pāṣaṇḍa saṁśrayāṁ vṛtti*).[161] It seems that the śūdras showed their special attraction for heretical doctrines. The period between the first century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. witnessed the acceptance of Buddhism by śūdras and foreigners.[162] The śūdras were attracted to Buddism, because it denounced *varṇāśrama dharma*, and challenged the supremacy of the brāhmaṇas. The śūdras began to preach the doctrines of religion as the *Vāyu*[163] and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* say, "With white teeth, eyes brought under control, heads shaved and red clothes on, the śūdras will perform religious deeds."[164]

Many śūdras began to accept the doctrine of heretics, and got out of the control of the brāhmaṇas. Such acceptance of heretical religion by this caste was highly detrimental to the interest of the brāhmaṇas. So in order to face such difficulties our Purāṇakāra,[165]

like Kauṭilya[166] and other,[167] lays emphasis on the old and traditional view that śūdras should render service to the twice-born. Our Purāṇakāra endeavours to keep the śūdras in brāhmaṇical fold. In order to win over the heart of the śūdras, the Purāṇa prescribes a heaven for them for the performance of their service to *dvija*.[168] A śūdra is elevated to region of Gandharva for their service.[169] The Purāna also appreciates the śūdras for their service in the Kali age.[170] Such provisions are obviously intended to attract the mind of the śūdras towards their traditional duty. It is also clear that for the benefit of upper castes such duty was assigned to the śūdras. Without their service, twice-born might have faced many difficulties in their daily life.

Though it was not a free service, the income might have been very low and inadequate for their maintenance. The śūdras might have been unable to maintain themselves and their family by serving *dvījas*. Our Purāṇa, therefore, appears to have allowed the śūdras to maintain themselves by having recourse to trade, mechanical labour[171] and by selling and purchasing articles.[172] The Smṛti literature[173] also supports this fact that the śūdras should live by practising mechanical arts.

But this is not the complete picture of the status of the śūdras in the age of our Purāṇa. The śūdras not only rendered their services to upper castes, but sometimes they became kings, and ran the administration. Mahāpadma Nanda, a great king, has been described in the Purāṅa as born from a śūdra woman[174]. The Purāna also refers to the śūdra, along with mlecchas and vrātyas as ruling over the region comprising Sindhu, Kāśmīra, etc.[175] But such references to śūdra kings are very few in ancient Indian history. The rise of the Nandas, who were of low born, did not put an end to the political disabilities of the śūdras. But the Dharmaśāstras are not in favour of coronating a śūdra as a king.

We have already seen that the śūdras were embracing Buddhism and other heretical doctrines in the age of our Purāṇa. Hence, the Purāṇa appears to have prescribed some religious facilities for the śūdras to keep them into the brāhmaṇical fold. It allows a śūdra to make gifts to the brāhmaṇas,[176] and to perform *pitṛśrādha*, and offer

water to ancestors.[177] It, further allows the śūdras to perform *pākayajña*[178] and other sacrifices without *mantras*. Manu[179] also prescribes all religious rites without *mantras* for the śūdras.

Though the śūdras had been given a few religious facilities, their social status in general, as depicted in the Purāṇa, appears to be very low in comparison to other castes. Like other authorities,[180] the Purāṇa[181] prescribes a larger period of impurity for the śūdras than that of other castes. Their duty of rendering services to upper castes also indicates the degraded and low position of the śūdras in the society.[182] Even their profession was not to be followed by other castes. The Purāṇa does not allow the brāhmaṇas and the kṣatriyas, even in distress, to follow the profession of a śūdra.[183] The low status of the śūdras can further be marked that the sustainer of a śūdra was not to be invited in the *śrāddha* function.[184] So the Purāṇa appears to be against those persons who sustain the issue of a śūdra. This is not at all. The śūdras were allowed to marry in their own caste, and they were to approach their wives only;[185] whereas other castes were allowed to have a śūdra wife.[186] A brāhmaṇa husband of a vṛṣalī (*vrsalipati*) was not invited in the *śrāddha*. Other authorities also do not allow a śūdra to marry a woman of unequal caste. According to Gautama, a son begotten by a śūdra on a women of unequal caste was regarded as *patita*.[187] It is mostly to such marriages and connections that the early law-books trace the origin of about a dozen mixed castes.[188] It may be further noticed that there were no rules and regulations for the śūdras regarding their food and drink.[189] They were at liberty to take whatever food they liked; but numerous rules and regulations regarding food, drink and dinner were framed for other castes.[190] Thus it appears from our Purāṇa that position of the śūdras was very low in society.

*The Āśrama System*

The *āśrama* is another important institution of the Hindu society. It will be not out of place to trace briefly the development of this system in ancient India. The idea of the *āśrama* system can be dated in the Vedic age.[191] Some obscure and faint ideas of this system can be marked in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*.[192] A much clear reference to the three *āśramas* is mentioned in the *Chhāndogya Upaniṣad*[193] which clearly associates the term *āśrama* to *dharma* though its association

with caste is not definitely indicated.[194] The Jātakas seem to be acquainted with the four *āśramas*.[195] In the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, we get a definite and clear evidences of the prevalence of this system.[196] The conception of the *āśrama* system has been elaborated in the whole range of the Dharmaśāstra literature.[197] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[198] also shows its acquaintance with the four *āśramas, i.e.*, (1) *brahmacharya* (studenthood), (ii) *gṛhastha*—the life of householder, (iii) *vānaprastha*—retired life in the forest, after abandoning the home, and (iv) *saṁnyāsa*—the life of complete renunciation of worldly relations and attachments. The Purāṇa, with full confidence, says that there is no fifth stage.[199]

The conception of the four āśramas is to be discussed here to know the idea of the kind of discipline and training which the individual is expected to undergo in these *āśramas*.

The *brahmacharyāśrama* began with the upanayana *saṁskāra*.[200] The followers of this stage had to spend their time in the *gurukula* for their vedic education. In our Purāṇa, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa,[201] Sagara[202] and Prahlāda[203] are said to have got their education at the residence of their respective teachers. The conception of the *gurukula* is not a new one in the Purāṇa as it can be found in other ancient texts[204] also. The existence of the *gurukula* can also be marked in the sculpture[205] of the Bharhut railing where pupils are clearly depicted as studying before ạ teacher. In the *gurukala*, the students got proper training. The students had to follow the rules and regulations of this stage, and they had to lead *brahmacharya*[206] life only. The main aim behind the *brahmacharya* life was to control the never ending desires of a student, and to train the student in the habits of simple life. It is also clear from the Purāṇa, that students had to follow pure (*śaucha*) and religious life in this stage.[207] They had to observe religious rites (*vratāni*), and to perform the two *saṁdhyas*. It should be pointed out that the idea behind the performance of religious rites was only to infuse religious sentiments in the mind of students.

In a *gurukula*, students had to show a very high degree of reverence to their teacher. The Purāṇa lays emphasis on rendering service to teacher (*śuśrūṣaṇaṁ guroḥ*).[208] It states that the student must stand

when his teacher is standing; more when he is walking and sit beneath him when he is seated; he never sit nor walk, nor stand when his teacher does the reverse.[209] It further advises the students to bathe in water which has first been used for his preceptor's bath and to bring fuel and water and whatsoever else may be required by teacher.[210] The smṛti literature[211] also lays emphasis on showing reverence to teacher. In the *Mahābhārata*[212] we have several instances of strict obedience of the teacher's word by the pupils. These rules were intended to infuse the idea of high reverence in the heart of pupil towards his teacher. The reason seems to be clear. Unless the teacher is regarded with deep reverence as well as deep love by the students, he would not get success in carrying the psychological influence over the student as is very essential for the proper guide, especially when most of the education was oral transmission of knowledge by the teacher.

The Purāṇa also lays emphasis on the practice of begging by the students. It advises them to collect food by alms with the permission of their teacher.[213] Many others[214] also corroborate the existence of this practice in the *gurukula*. Its educative value has been elaborated in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* which points out that it is meant to produce a spirit of humanity and renunciation in the heart of the pupil. While discussing the moral effects of begging, R.K. Mookherjee opines, "This makes for a more complete organisation of the personality, a deeper loyalty to the system. Further, the daily duty of begging makes the ego less and less assertive, and with it, all unruly desires and passions, which do not shoot forth, as their roots wither...... Lastly, begging makes the pupil feel how unattached he is to any tie, and a sense of independence, contributing to a sense of selfhood."[124a] We may further add that the rule of begging was laid down for a student in order to teach him humility and make him realise that he was getting education due to the help of society. Through the begging the students learnt self-reliance and self-restraint.

The moral influence of the teacher upon his pupil must have acquired an added weight due to the fact that the teacher realised no fees from the pupils for his labour. The Purāṇa[215]

severely denounces the teaching for a stipulated fee (*bhrtakādhyāpakaḥ*) as well as being taught for a stipulated fee (*bhṛtakādhyāpitaḥ*). Manu and others[216] also have criticised such fees from a student. Our Purāṇa further ordains that after finishing his course of studies, a student should offer a gift (*guru-dakṣiṇā*) to his teacher.[217] We are told in a story that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, after finishing their education, paid *gurudakṣiṇā* to their common teachers Sāndīpani.[218] The smṛtis[219] and the *Mahābhārata*[220] also support the prevalence of this gift. Such gifts to the teacher were regarded as honoraria paid to the teacher, as an expression of respect for one who was very often himself a man with little or no financial possession. After the completion of the study, the *brāhmacharya āśrama* ends.

The second stage is *gṛhasthāśrama*. The Purāṇa[221] and other text[222] make provisions for entering into this stage after completing the studenthood. The performance of marriage was very essential in this stage. We shall see later on that with the rise of heretics, many people become ascetics, and did not care for this *āśrama*. But *grhasthāśrama* was very eassential for Hindu society. Any neglectful act of this stage was detrimental to the Hindu society. So the Purāṇa adopts various means to establish this *āśrama*. It lays much emphasis on the performance of marriage in this stage.[223] After marriage, one has to perform numerous duties for society and his family. The Purāṇa, by eulogising this stage also tries to attach importance to it. It regards this *āśrama* as the best of all *āśramas*.[224] Among all the *āśrama*, the *gṛhasthāśrama* is given a very high place of honour. The Purāṇa also regards it as the shelter of all students and humanity who live on begging.[225] Other sources have also lauded this stage. We read in the *Mahābhārata*[226] that the life of a householder itself is very superior and sacred, and gives scope for fulfilment (of life mission). The Manu Smṛti[227] while attaching importance to it, says, "As rivers, great and small, find a resting place in the sea, even so men of all *āśramas* gather their stability and support at the hands of the householders." The householder is declared to the superior to all *āśramas*, for he supports the three.[228] Such praises were done only to attract the

attention of people towards this stage. The Purāṇakāra appears to have been aware of rise of anti-brāhmaṇical section who embraced heretic-religion. Many people renunciated the world, and led the life of ascetics. The tendency of becoming ascetics, without passing householder's life might have created great disorder in the brāhmaṇical society. So the praising of the second stage was the only way to prohibit the people from becoming ascetics.

It is clear from the Purāṇa[229] that a householder has to perform the five sacrifices, *i.e.* the offering of *piṇḍa* to ancestors, performance of sacrifices for gods, offering of food to guests, the study of holy scriptures for sages, and the worship of Brahmā by producing progeny. The Purāṇa does not give the details of these five sacrifices, but other authorities explain them fully. Manu, while refering to the worship of ancestor, mentions the offering of water[230] and *bali* for them.[231] The worship of god was done by the householder only by offering oblation into fire.[232] So all people, by offering oblation into fire for gods, could show their due respect to gods. Another sacrifice is *brahmayajña, i.e.* study of the holy scripture. This *yajña* was the study of Vedas every day. The main purpose of this sacrifice was to engage every body in the study of the history, the Purāṇa and the Vedas. The study of the *Vedāṅga* and stories of heroes and other *Vidyās* were also included in this sacrifice.[233] Its main aim seems to preserve the Vedic knowledge and old tradition in India. Another sacrifice was *bhūta-yajña*, in which the food was given to all creatures.[234] Manu[235] and other smṛtikāras[236] also prescribed the offering of food to all beings such as all gods, *bhūtas*, ancestors, dogs, untouchables and birds, etc. The main idea behind this sacrifice seems to show kindness and tolerence towards all creatures.

Another sacrifice is *nṛyajña, i.e.*, the hospitality shown to a guest. The guests were respected in India in society since the Vedic age.[237] In the *Gṛhya Sūtra* several rules were formulated for honouring the guests.[238] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[239] also throws ample light on this topic and it gives a definition of a guest—a guest is he who is not an inhabitant of the same village, but who comes from other place and whose name and lineage are unknown.[240] The medicants are also included in

the list of guests. The *Smṛtis*[241] have also a similar definition of a guest. It may be suggested here that the definition of a guest has been given in ancient texts with certain motives. For want of any such definition a householder would have faced difficulties, because many persons would have become his guests. So in order to overcome the difficulty such definition was given. Co-villagers, friends, fellow-students were not regarded as *atithi.*

The Purāna prescribes a time for a householder to wait for his guests. It says that after *baliharaṇa* a householder should wait in front of the yard of his house for as much time as would be required for milking a cow or a time at his desire for receiving guests.[242] It appears that our Purāṇa does not mention any definite time, but it does not advise a householder to wait for a guest for a long time. Other ancient authorities also mention a definite time *viz.* one-eight of a *muhūrta.*[243] It should be pointed out that the prescription of time to wait for a guest was essential, because the householders had to perform a lot of works, and whole society was dependent upon them, hence they were not to devote their time uselessly. We read in our Purāṇa that a householder should wait for a guest before taking his meal.[244] Such rules appear to have been framed for the householders so that they would not be put into trouble for preparing food for their guests.

Our Purāṇa[245] lays emphasis on showing respect to guests. A householder should pay respect to a guest, without enquiring his studies, his school, his practice or his race. The Purāṇa further ordains that he, who feeds himself and neglects *atithi,* goes to hell[246] A man becomes free from sin after showing hospitality to the guests.[247] The guest, who departs disappointed from any house and proceeds elsewhere, transfers his sins to the owner of that house, and takes away with him the householder's merits[248]. The *Vayu Purāṇa*[249] and *Bṛhat Parāśara*[250] explain it in a different way, and they say that *yogīns* and *siddhas* wander over this earth in different forms for the welfare of people; therefore, one should, with folded hands, welcome a guest. Other authorities[251] have also extols the hospitality. Why such respect was

shown to the guest in ancient time? The motive behind the hospitality is clear. In ancient India there was no inn or hotel or rest house like modern time. The means of communications were not swift. The travellers might have faced many difficulties in taking rest and food. It was only possible for a householder to provide food for a guest. So the householder had been advised to show favours to his guests. Religious tinge appears to have been given to the idea of honouring the guest; so that a householder should show hospitality to his guest. The horror of hell has been shown to those householders who disrespect the guest. So due to this horror also people would have followed the rules of hospitality.

It is clear from the Purāṇa that a guest was to be fed first and it further says that a man, who eats his food without bestowing upon a guest, feeds only upon inequity[252]. Similar conception, about the offering of food to guest, is found in other texts[253]. It is evident from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[254] that a householder is not to partake meals before the guests; but rather after guests. Manu[255], too advises the householder to feed guests first.

Our Purāṇa states something more about showing an honour to guest. On the arrival of a guest, the householder should receive the former with a hospitable welcome; seat is to be offered to him, and his feet are to be washed; and food is to be given with liberality.[256] The guest is to be civilly and kindly spoken to; and the host should accompany the guest when he departs[257]. Other sources[258] also advise the householder to accompany the guest when the latter departs. The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*[259] states that when the guest departs the host should accompany him to the place where his conveyance is drawn up and if he has no conveyance then till the guest gives him leave to go or if the guest forgets to give leave, the host should return from the boundary. We find in the *Śākuntalaṁ*[260] that Kaṇva's pupil reminds his preceptor that one should accompany dear relative to some extent.

Thus, it is clear from the foregoing discussion that the actual purpose of five sacrifices was to devote oneself to god, to show

respect to the sages who composed the vedic literature, to remember ancestors, to show the feeling of love and affection towards human beings and all creatures. Every householder was expected to perform these sacrifices by themselves.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* gives details of daily and periodical duties of a householder. It is not essential to dilate upon the details of the daily duties of the householders as contained in the Purāṇa. Most usual, outstanding and important matters, as discussed in the Purāṇa, are such as getting up from bed,[261] *śaucha*[262] (bodily purity), *snāna*[263] (bath), *saṁdhyā*,[264] *tarpaṇa*,[265] honouring guests,[266] *bhojana*[267] (dinner), study of holy scriptures,[268] evening *saṁdhya*,[269] gifts, going to bed,[270] etc.

The *vānaprasthāśrama* comes after the householder-stage. The Purāṇa,[271] like the other ancient authorities,[272] lays down numerous rules about this stage. A householder has been allowed to enter into this stage at the beginning of his old age.[273] It means that no one was allowed to enter into this stage before the old age. the Purāṇa, in order to lay emphasis on this fact, narrates that Yayāti[274] Ṛṣabhadeva[275], Saubhari[276] and others, in their old age, went to forest to spend their life of a hermit. The emphasis on the beginning of old age for entering into this stage seems to be essential. The Purāṇa does not appear to be in favour of reckless renunciation of world without the consideration of age. Generally, after fulfilling the three obligations in the *gṛhasthāśrama*, an individual becomes fit to enter the *vānaprasthāśrama*.

We further read in the Purāṇa that a householder, at the decline of the age, may go to a forest with his wife or he may leave her incharge of his sons.[277] In a story we note that stage Saubhari, after entering the hermit life, went to a forest with his wives for the performances of penances.[278] But Ṛṣabhadeva and Yayāti went to forests without their wives.

In the hermit life, one has to control his senses of enjoyment, he has to take leaves, roots, fruits, etc. as food articles.[279] Manu, too, ordains that he has to avoid partaking of honey, flesh, mushrooms growing in the ground, and the vegetables and he is not to touch

sweet things or meat.[280] It appear that such restricted food articles have prescribed for this āśrama, so that its followers should spend his simple life. For his clothing he has to use the deer-skin or the bark of a tree.[281] He has to allow his beard and nails to grow.[282] He has to lead a celibate life, sleeping on the ground.[283] Yet, he has to take three baths in a day[284] and to perform severe auterities.[285] Manu also clearly mentions that the follower of this stage should practise servere austerities by standing in the midst of five fires, by standing in the open in the rains, by wearing wet garments in winter and thus he habituates his body to privations and mortifications.

It is further obvious from our Purāṇa that in this stage one has to perform religious duties. He has to offer oblations to the gods and to fire, and to treat all that come to him with hospitality.[286] Manu also holds the similar view that in this *āśrama* one has to continue the performance of the five great sacrifices which he used to perform in the *gṛhasthāśrama* in the proper manner.[287]

Our Purāṇa further informs us that the sage, who diligently follows these rules and leads the life of the hermit (*vānaprastha*), consumes, like fire, all imperfections, and conquers for himself the place of eternity.[288] It also assigns a heaven to those who follow the rules and regulations of this *āśrama*.[289] It is clear that the hope of getting a heaven might have inspired the followers of this stage to observe its rules and regulations in proper manner.

The *sanyāsāśrama* is regarded as the fourth and the last stage of life. The Purāṇa calls it as *bhikṣu āśrama*.[290] This stage beings after the *vānaprastha* stage.[291] An individual has to enter last āsrama of *sanyāsa*, casting off all attachment and affection for his wife, children and possession (*putradravya-kalatreṣutyaktasneho*).[292] Manu and others also advise the individual in this stage to give up all attachments of the world.[293] So he should possess nothing, and he must always move fearlessly in this world.[294] He has further been advised by the Purāṇa to reside for the night in a village but not more than five nights at one place in city.[295] He is not allowed to remain at one place, but to wander from one place to another. A *sanyāsī* has to forego

the three objects of human existence (*i.e.*, pleasure, wealth and virtue). He be indifferent to friends and the friend of all living beings.[296] So it appears that he should be unattached to all objects of sense and pleasures. The Purāṇa also ordains that a *sanyāsī* should avoid all troubles or injury to creature and should equally avoid attachment to anything.[297] It seems that he has to follow the path of *ahiṁsā* or non-violence. He should, for the support of existence, go for alms at the houses of three first castes, at the time when the fires have extinguished, and people have eaten.[298] The smṛti literature also lays down that he should go out for begging when the smoke from kitchens has ceased to rise and when the noise of pestles has died down and the live coals (in the kitchen) have been extinguished and the plates, used for the dinning (by the householders) have been kept aside.[299] It is obvious that a *sanyāsī* has to beg alms for the support of his existence and he has not to depend upon any one for help or support.

The Purāṇa under consideration also advises the wandering mendicant to call nothing his own, and to suppress desire, anger, covetousness and pride.[300] A sage or hermit, who gives no cause for alarm to living being, need never apprehend any danger for them. It may be pointed out that such facts have been stated for an ascetic so that he should not fear from the worldly creatures.

This *āśrama* is no less important than other *āśramas*. The Purāṇa, while eulogising the *āśrama*, says that a twice-born who seeks for liberation and is pure of heart and whose mind is perfected by self-introspection, will secure the sphere of Brahmā, which is tranquil, and is as a bright flame that emits no smoke.[301] Manu, too, praises this *āśrama* that all the sins of the man, who passes through the *sanyāsāśrama* in this manner, are washed off and destroyed and thus he attains the ultimate end or goal of existence.

Thus it is clear that a *sanyāsī* is devoid of any family bond, he is homeless, wanderer, begging, without belongings or property of his own, and a *sanyāsī* appears to have made complete renunciation of everything.

We have seen that the Purāṇa is fully acquainted with the rules and regulations of the *varṇāśrama* system. It is very difficult to say whether the people followed these rules totally or not. It is essential to point out that the Purāṇa mentions the neglectful tendency towards *varnāśrama dharma* in Kali age. The Purāṇa gives us the picture of a society in which the people often did not follow the rules of caste and *āśrama*. The people did not often like to observe the rules of *varṇa* and to perform the duties as mentioned in the vedas.[302] They neglected the rules of *snāna, hōma, japa, dāna.*[303] Vaiśyas abandoned agriculture and commerce and gained a livelihood by servitude or the exercise of mechanical arts[304] and śūdras become the followers of heretical doctrines.[305] The householders also did not follow their duties, and anchorets subsisted upon food accepted by rustics and mendicant were influenced by the regard for friends and associates.[306] People took their food without previous oblution, and without worshipping fire, gods or offering obsequial libations to their progenitors. Thus it is clear that there was a tendency to neglect the rules of *varṇāś-rama* in that age.

The causes for the neglectful tendency towards the *varṇāśrama* are not far to seek. The anti-brāhmaṇical movements, foreign invasions and the rise of the śūdras affected the brāhmaṇical society. The Purāṇa mentions the existence of heretics who were dead against the position of the brāhmaṇas and the authority of the Vedas, and were not favourable to the *varṇāśrama dharma*. The rise and propagation of the heresies proved injurious to the brāhmaṇical society and detrimental to the *varṇāśrama* system. We get references to the existence of heretics liks *Pāṣaṇḍas* and *Nagnas* who were against the brāhmaṇas, sacrifices, and the Vedas.[307]

The foreigners' rule had also created distrubance in society. We should point out that the Purāṇa refers to several foreign races such as the Ābhīras, the Gardabhilas, the Śakas, the Yavanas, and many outlandish dynasties as the successors of the Āndhras.[308] These dynasties were, to a large extent, contemporary with one another, not consecutive. The casteless foreign races have been held in contempt in our Purāṇa and they have been called as *Mlecchas*[309] and inimical

to brāhmaṇism.[310] The conduct of the foreign invaders and the disturbance they created in society are mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. The Purāṇa[311] says, "These will all be contemporary monarchs, reigning over the earth; kings of churlish spirit, violent temper, and ever addicted to falsehood and wickedness. They will inflict death on women, children, and cows; they will seize upon the property of their subjects; they will be of limited power, and will for the most part rapidly rise and fall; their lives will be short, their desires insatiable, and they will display but little piety. The people of the various contries intermingling with them will follow their example and the barbarians being powerful in the patronage of the princes, whilst purer tribes are neglected, the people will perish. Wealth and piety will decrease day by day, until the world will be wholly depraved. Then property alone will confer rank; wealth will be the only source of dharma; passion will be the sole bond of union between the sexes; falsehood will be the only means of success in litigation; and women will be objects merely of sensual gratification. Earth will be venerated but for its mineral treasures; the brahmanical theard will constitute a brāhmaṇa; external types will be the only distinctions of the several orders of life; dishonesty will be the universal means of subsistence; weakness will be the cause of dependence; menace and presumption will be substituted for learning; liberality will be devotion, simple ablution will be purification; mutual assent will be marriage; fine clothes will be dignity; and water afar off will be esteemed as a holy place. Amidst all castes he who is the strongest will reign over a principality thus vitiated by many faults. The people, unable to bear the heavy burdens imposed upon them by their avaricious sovereigns, will take refuge amongst the valleys of mountains, and will be glad to feed upon wild honey, herbs, roots fruits, flowers, and leaves; their only covering will be the bark of trees, and they will be exposed to the cold, and wind, and sun and rain. No man's life will exceed three and twenty years. Thus in the Kali age, shall decay constantly proceed, until the human race approach its annihilation." Thus it is clear that as a result of political upheavals and of the intermixture of the people with casteless and unrighteous foreigners,

famine and pestilence would occur, people become regardless of dharma and immorality prevailed. So the foreigners brought unrest in the society which was based on *varṇāśrama dharma.*

We have already seen that many śūdras became kings and some of them accepted heretical doctrines. But the brāhmaṇas always emphasised the low social status of the śūdras. In religious life śūdras also enjoyed very little privileges. Hazra opines, "It is natural, therefore, that these down-trodden śūdras should have revolted against the Brāhmaṇa when they had political power in their hand."[312] So the rise of the status of śūdras also appears to have disturbed the brāhmaṇical society which was mainly based on the *varṇāśrama-dharma.*

The author of our Purāṇa appears to have been well acquainted with the condition of his contemporary society. He does not appear as sitting idle, but he adopts various means to establish and popularise the *varṇāśramadharma.* In order to lay much importance on the *varṇāśrama dharma,* the Purāṇakāra associates gods, goddesses and sages to it. In our Purāṇa, Aurva, being questioned by king Sagara about the mode of the worship of Viṣṇu, says, "The supreme Being is worshipped by him who is loyal to the duties required by his own caste and stage of life. There is no other way of satisfying him. By performing sacrifices he makes oblations to him, by muttering prayers he invokes him, and by hunting others, he hurts him, because Hari resides in all. Therefore, Janārdana is worshipped by that man who is given to the rules of good conduct and performs the duties of his own caste."[313] Thus it is clear that men can attain Viṣṇu by obeserving the rules of the *varṇāśrama dharma.*

The performance of the *varnāśrama dharma* was believed to be helpful in bringing happiness both in this world and the next. The Purāṇa says, "The means of subsistence having been provided for the beings, Brahmā prescribed laws suited to their station and faculties, the duties of the several castes and orders, and the regions to those of the different castes who were observant of their duties. The heaven of the Pitṛs is the region of devout Brāhmaṇas. The sphere of Indra, of Kṣatriyas who fly not from the field. The region of the winds is

assigned to vaiśyas who are diligent in their occupations and submissive. Śūdras are elevated to the sphere of the Gandharvas. Those Brāhmaṇas who lead religious lives go to the world of the eighty-eight thousand saints : and that of the seven Ṛṣis is the seat of pious anchorets and hermits. The world of ancestors is that of respectable householders. The imperishable region of the yogis is the highest seat of Viṣṇu, where they perpetually meditate upon the supreme being, with mind intent on him alone : the sphere where they reside, the gods themselves cannot behold."[314] The Purāṇa at another place refer to the heavens for the different *āśramas*.[315] Men who follow the rules of *varṇāśrama* can also be saved from hells and the power of Yama. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Yama advises his messenger (Yama-dūta) not to touch the Viṣṇu-worshippers, one of whose features is their devotion to the *varṇāśrama dharma*.[316]

The Purāṇa fabricates several stories to the show the bad results of the violation of the rules of *varṇāśrama dharma*. There is a story of Vena who neglected the rule of *varṇāśrama dharma*, and hence he was killed by the sages.[317] The story of demons shows that some demons became very powerful by practising the *veda dharma*, but were deluded by *Māyā moha* only to be destroyed by the gods.[318] Besides these stories, there are several chapters on the description of Yuga, on Naraka, and on the results of action. The Purāṇa[319] depicts the miseries and degradation of the people in the Kali age which is described mainly to show the result of the neglectful tendency of the people towards the *varṇāśrama dharma*. The long description of the Kali age in our Purāṇa is only to attract the mind of people towards brāhmaṇical society which is based on *varṇāśrama* system.

The picture of hells and of the punishments inflicted there on the sinners are also very fearful. In the hell, it is said, the sinners are punished with great cruelty for neglecting or violating the *varṇāśrama dharma*. The Purāṇa prescibes a hell called Saṁdaṁśa for the violator of a vow and of the rules of *āśrama*.[320] Thus our Purāṇakāra appears to have attempted to glorify the *varṇāśrama dharma*.

The foregoing discussion clearly shows that the society was fully acquainted with *varṇāśrama dharma*. But there was a section in the society who opposed it. The neglectful tendency towards *varṇāśrama dharma* was also in existence. But we have seen that the Purāṇakāra adopted several means to popularise the *varṇāśrama dharma* in society.

*Untouchability*

Untouchability was not prevalent in early Vedic age,[321] but in the pre-Mauryan society[322] we begin to get clear status of certain untouchables castes. The Jātakas[323] and the Pāli texts[324] clearly depict the social status of certian untouchables. The horror of untouchability was also on its peak in the Epic age.[325]

The idea of untouchability can also be found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. There existed a few castes which were despised by the higher castes. The chaṇḍālas were very prominent among untouchables. To understand their real conditions let us look into the social status of the chaṇḍālas, who held the lowest postion in society. The very sight of a chaṇḍala has been regarded as impure by our Purāṇa[326]. Such idea about chaṇḍāla is also found in the Jātaka literature,[327] where it is mentioned that a daughter of a seṭhi of Vārāṇasī, seeing a chaṇḍāla washed her eyes. This shows the degraded status of the chandalas.

It is further clear from the Purāṇa that the chaṇḍālas and some other peoples were not invited to religious ceremonies or even in the *śrāddha*.[328] The chaṇḍālas had not been given any religious facility, and they were debarred from attending to any religious function. They were equated with eunuch, *pāpi*, Pāṣaṇḍa, cock, dog, *Nagna*, monkey, and village hog. It also tends us to suppose that they had lowest status in society. Several ancient texts[329] also refer to the degraded status of the chāṇḍālas in the society. Though the details of their works are not known from our Purāṇa, yet from the meagre information available it can be presumed that they were employed for low works. It is clear from the Jātakas that some of the chaṇḍālas were jugglers,[330] some menders of old rubbish,[331] and some burners of corpses.[332] Manu says that they should carry the corpse of one who has no relation,[333] and they should kill the criminals condemned to death by the kings.[334]

Though the chāṇḍālas were very despised, we come acrose a few cases in the popular stories where their lower origin was ignored. We are told in the Purāṇa that during the famine time, the children of Viśvāmitra ate flesh, brought by a chāṇḍāla[335].

Vṛṣala seems to be another untouchable caste as mentioned in the Purāṇa which advises[336] the householders not to invite the husband of a vṛṣala women in *śrāddha.* The vṛṣala stands for a social outcaste[337].

The Niṣādas were also untouchable caste. Our Purāṇa refers to the origin of the Niṣādas thus. On the death of King Vena, sages together rubbed the thigh of the king, who had no offspring, to produce a son. From thus rubbed, came forth, a being of the complexion of black with flattened features and of dwarfish stature. His descendants were the Niṣādas, the inhabitants of the Vindhyā mountain. So the Niṣādas were born of the sin of king Vena[338]. They were also looked down upon in the society. They had come to be looked down upon with scorn as evil people even in the days of Yaska[339]. According to some authorities a Nisāda is an offspring of the brāhmaṇa with a śūdra woman[340]. In the Jātakas, the Niṣādas are generally hunter[341] and they lived outside the towns and the cities[342]. According to Manu, their profession was to kill fish[343].

It is clear from the study of our Purāṇa that untouchability sometimes arose not by birth alone but as a result of loss of status as a member of the *Varṇāśrama* society. A person became outcast and untouchable by being guilty of certain acts that amounted to grave sin. The Purāṇa informs us that due to certain acts Triśaṅku[344] became chaṇḍla. But this chaṇḍālahood was for temporary period. We are also informed by the Purāṇa that Triśanku a chaṇḍāla tried his best to get rid of untouchability and he got success also[345]. This fact, that untouchability arose due the certain grave act, can also be attested to by other sources. Manu also prescribes that those who are guilty of brāhmaṇa's murder, theft of brāhmaṇa's gold or drinkers of spirtuous liquors, should be excommunicated, no one should dine with them or teach them or officiate as priests for them, nor should

marriage relationship be entered into with them and they should wander over the world excluded from all vedic dharma[346]. But Manu also prescribes some *prāyaśchittas* for the restoration of caste and for becoming touchable[347].

Some persons were treated as untouchable simply through religious hatred and abhorrence because they belonged to a different sect or religion. The Purāṇa considers the *Nagna* and *Pāṣaṇḍa* to be untouchable and it says that a prudent person carefully avoids the conversation, or the contact, or the like, of those heretics, who are rendered impure by their desertion of the three Vedas[348]. Our Purāṇa further adds that one should not talk with or touch the *Pāṣaṇḍa*[349]. One should not see those persons who have given up the vedic religion and those who take dinner at the house of the *Pāṣaṇḍas*[350]. The *Nagnas* were also not to be touched because they were not follower of vedic religion. One should not indulge himself in conversation with the *Nagnas*[351]. The Purāṇa relates a story which shows that a talk with a *Nagna* or a *Pāṣaṇḍa* was a sin. Once king Śatrujit, the husband of queen Śaivyā, talked with a *Pāṣaṇḍa* and as a result of it the former took his birth into low creatures[352]. It is also mentioned that one should neither dine in the house of such person nor use anything of their house[353]. The Purāṇa further states that on being touched with such person, one should bathe with their clothes on or should see Sun[354]. These instances show that during the time of our Purāṇa the religious hatred and abhorrence fanned the flame of untouchability. It is also clear that due to religious differences the *Nagnas*, and the *Pāṣaṇḍas* were considered as untouchables. This idea also seems to be current in other texts. *Aparārka*[355] and *Smṛti Chandrika*[356] quote verses from the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* and other sources that "on touching Baudhas, Pāśupatis, Lokāyatika, Kapils and Brāhmaṇas guilty of doing actions inconsistent with their caste one should enter with the clothes on and also on touching Śaivas and atheists".

Some illegal progenies were also considered as untouchable. The *apaviddha*[357] *putra* was not to be invited in the *śrāddha* ceremony.

It is obvious from the Purāṇa that sometimes people become untouchable in certain conditions for certain days. A person,

during the time of mourning, is considered as impure, and is not touched by other persons[358]. This rule is applicable to all four castes.[359] The Purāṇa also ordains that on the death of a relation one person should neither give donation nor study religious books nor perform religious observances[360]. A person who has carried a corpse to the cemetary, is considered as an untouchable and our Purāṇa advises us neither to invite such person in the *śrāddha*[361] nor to see him. Further more, a women, in her monthly course, is also untouchable and she is not to be invited in religious function[362]. A man also becomes untouchable due to the birth of child in his family.

Certain persons, though not touchable ordinarily, become so, if they followed certain occupations, *e.g.*, if a person touches a Brāhmaṇa who is *devalaka*[363] or who is a priest for the whole village, or a person[364] who sells a *soma* plant.

Thus the foregoing survey clearly shows that a lot of the people of this country are affected by the principle of untouchability of the Hindu religion but all of them are not equal in status or all of them are not treated equally. As it has been marked that two types of untouchability were prevalent, *i.e.*, temporary and long term. Sometimes we find that all castes were treated as untouchable for a fixed period of time. A wife in her monthly period or during the first ten days of her delivery, a person who had carried a corpse were not pure till the period of impurity was over. We have also marked that people of all castes even the brāhmaṇas were with in the jurisdiction of this temporary untouchability. Other type was, long term untouchability. The untouchables of this type formed a separate group. The chāṇḍālas and others belonged to this group. Another feature of untouchability as we observe in the Purāṇa is that the life of untouchables specially chāṇḍāla in society was suppressed at every step by the upper and privileged class of people in the society. The chāṇḍālas could have hardly found any scope to raise their status in society. Moreover they were kept isolated from other persons. It is also evident that they had neither social, nor economic nor religious privileges. They were only under the oppressive hoofs of the upper and privileged class of society.

*Conversion*

In this section the problem of conversion as found in Purāṇa will be discussed. The conversion of foreigners into the fold of society was not a new thing in the age of our Purāṇa. Many foreigners were assimilated in Hindu fold. There are several instances which confirm the existence of this custom in the vedic age.[365] In the epic age also the process of conversion seems to continue in society. We are told in the *Mahābhārata*[366] that Indra advises the emperor Māndhātā to bring all foreign people like the Yavanas under brāhmaṇical fold.

The Purāṇa under review also refers to some cases of conversion of foreigners into Hindu folds. It is clear from some mythological stories in the text that many non-Aryan persons, belonging to foreign tribes like the Yavanas, the Śakas, were absorbed into Hindu society. In one story we are told that king Sagara defeated the foreign tribes like the Śakas, the Yavanas, the Kambojas, the Pāradas and the Pahlavas. They were stated to have followed brāhmaṇical religion; but later on they were discarded from the brahmanical society.[367] It shows that these foreign tribes were absorbed into the Hindu society in the age of the Purāṇa. At another place, our Purāṇa relates the story of issueless Yavana king,[368] who pleased sage Gārgya to produce a son on the queen of the former. This story certainly shows that Yavanas had faith in the *niyoga* system and appointed a sage for the same purpose. We are also informed in the same story that the Yavana king went to a forest after coronating his son as a king. It seems that the Yavana king also followed the *āśrama* system of the Hindu society. Some non-Aryan tribes were also taken into the fold of the Hindu society. Arjuna is said to have married a non-Aryan Nāga princess, Uḍūpī[369] while, Bhīma united himself with a non-Aryan princess Hiḍimbā.[370] The conversion of foreigners into the fold of Hinduism can be corroborated by some historical evidences. Some Indo-Bactrian kings (*i.e.*, the Yavanas) embraced Indian religion. It is clear from the *Milinda Pañho* that Menander had inclination towards Buddhism. The representation of an elephant on the obverse[371] of a cointype of Menander may be regarded as a

symbol for representing the nativity scene of Lord Buddha. Other kings Pantaleon and Agathocles, by representing the figure of Lakṣmī with a lotus on their coins,[372] appear to have accepted the Hindu religion. Yavana Heliodorus was also a devotee of Vāsudeva.[373] The Śaka-Scythians also embraced the Hindu culture and religion. Nahapāna's son-in-law Uṣabhadata[374] was a pro-brāhmaṇa. The Kṣatrapas also encouraged Buddhism to a certain extent.[375] Some Śaka rulers were also under the influence of Hindu culture. Rudradāman, Rudra-siṁha, Rudra-sena all are Hindu names which indicate the Śaiva influence on the royal Śaka family. The Kuṣāṇas, another foreign tribe, were also assimilated in the Hindu society.[376] Wima Kadaphises, Kaniṣka, Huviska and others by representing the Hindu gods on their coins, also showed their respect for Hinduism.

### *The Saṁskāras*

The idea of saṁskāra has played an important role in Hindu society from very ancient times.[377] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to a few *saṁskāras*, though they are many in number.[378] The Purāṇa gives details of the first *saṁskāra*, but it does not mention its name. We read in the Purāṇa that in due season (*i.e.*, ṛtu season) a man should approach his wife.[379] Other Dharmaśāstras consider the fourth to sixteenth night after the monthly course of wife for conception as favourable.[380]

Like several Dharmaśāstras,[381] the Purāṇa[382] prescribes the later part of night for cohibition, but not the day time. Certain auspicious dates,[383] *i.e.* eighth (*aṣṭamī*), the fourteenth (*chaturdaśī*), the fifteenth (*amāvāsyā*), *pūrṇimā* (the full moon night), solar eclipse and all the festivals were specially prohibited for it. The Purāṇa ordains that if a man cohibits with his wife on festivals then after death he will go to a hell where ordure will be his food. Some smṛtis also prohibit certain dates for this purpose. These days were meant for religious observances and, therefore, any sexual act was eschewed on them. R.B. Pandey gives an astrological reason behind this prohibition that owing to the attraction of the moon and increase of the watery substance, the physical condition of the earth becomes abnormal on

these dates and consequently the health of the animal world is not sound. So it was advisable that such important act as *garbhādhāna* should not be performed on these dates.[384] We may further suggest that these dates were regarded as holy days. Hence, in order to infuse the religious sentiment and idea of purity in the people such dates had been prohibited for cohibition.

A few places, such as the holy places, the courtyard, the cowpen, the crossing of road, burning ghat, the gardens and water have been prohibited by the Purāṇa[385] for the performance of this act. The Purāṇa further says that one should not approach his wife who has not bathed, who is still in her menses, who is not praiseworthy, who is angry, who is ill, who is not generous, who is thinking of another man, who has no passion at all, who is hungry or over-eaten.[386] Thus it appears that the Purāṇa recognises some exceptions in performance of this act on physical, moral, and mental grounds.

The Purāṇa always considers husband as the right person to perform this *saṁskāra*. It is dead against the commitment of adultery with another's wife.[387] Several Dharmaśāstras[388] also opine that none but the husband is fit for it.

When the husband was physically unfit another substitute was also allowed. The Purāṇa shows its favour for the begetting sons by the *niyoga* system. This system will be discussed later on.[389] It may be pointed out that through the *niyoga* system children were begotten for the benefit of the family and the dead fathers.

The *Sīmantonnayana saṁskāra* is another *saṁskāra*, mentioned in our Purāṇa.[390] Its details are given in several Dharmaśāstras.[391] The rite is called *sīmanta*, in which the hair of a pregnant woman is parted. The proper ritual begins with the *mātṛpūjā*, the *nāndī śrāddha* and oblation to Prajāpati and it has also other long procedure which is not essential to discuss here in detail. The purpose of this *saṁskāra* appears to safeguard the baby in womb from the evil spirits.[392] It is also performed for taking care of the pregnant woman and to keep her in happy mood.[393]

The *Jātakārma*[394] *saṁskāra* is also another ceremony which is performed at the birth of child. It is clear from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that certain ceremonies are performed after the birth of a child.[395] The father is required to take bath with his clothes and he is to perform the *nāndī śrāddha*[396] and the *jātakarma* ceremonies. Then the brāhmaṇas, invited for the purpose, are given food. We are also informed that *śrāddhas* are to be performed for pleasing gods and *pitṛs.* There is also a provision for offering of balls of food, mixed with curds, to the *pitṛs.* Thus we can conclude that this rite was well known in the age of our Purāṇa. Its details are lacking in our Purāṇa, but other components of the rite are mentioned in the *Gṛhya Sūtra* literature.[397]

Thus it is clear that general care was taken in this *saṁskāra* for the safety of the baby and its mother. There was a religious sentiment behind it. It is generally believed that with the performance of this rite, divine beings would protect the baby and its mother from the evil spirits. We mark that the lengthy rituals, as found in the *Gṛhya Sūtra* literature, might have been performed by the privileged and well-to-do class of people. Its performance seems to be beyond the means of poor and general people.

The *Nāmakaraṇa saṁskāra* is also an important *saṁskāra* in the Hindu society. It is performed to name the child on a certain auspicious time. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[398] gives the details of this *saṁskāra.* It says that *nāmakaraṇa* should be performed on the tenth day after the birth of child.[399] Some authorities[400] refer to the different dates, but several authorities[401] seem to have prescribed the tenth day after the birth of the child for the *nāmakāraṇa.* It shows that the tenth day from the birth was generally prescribed for naming the child.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* further mentions different rules for the *namākaraṇa* and it says that the first term of the child's name should be name of a god.[402] Kane[403] has suggested that the naming the child after god was not in vogue in the vedic and the sūtra age, but this practice began in the first century of the Christian era. This fact can be corroborated by the *Mahābhāṣya*[404] which refers to the name

derived after name of gods. There are many names of Pāñchāla kings who were named after gods. Several Kṣatrapas and the Kuṣāṇa kings were named after Hindu gods. So the practice of giving the name of a child after god was prevalent in society in the pre-Gupta age.

The Purāṇa gives different surnames for the four castes, *i.e.*, *śarman*, *varman*, *gupta* and *dasa* for brāhmaṇa. kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra respectively. This view can be corroborated by other texts[405] also. But some historical instances show that this rule was not followed by many people blindly. It is clear from an epigraphic record[406] that Puṣya Gupta, a minister of the Maurya period, was a vaiśya by caste. The kings of the Gupta dynasty belonging to the vaiśya caste had the title of *gupta* so they followed this rule. But we have got several examples to show that many people did not follow this rule. The brāhmaṇa Maurya minister Kauṭilya had another name Viṣṇu Gupta and the king Chandra Gupta Maurya had also the title of gupta; but both persons were decidedly not the vaiśyas. It is clear from an inscription of Kakutstha Varmana[407] of the Kadamba family that the founder of this dynasty, who was a brāhmaṇa by caste, had been styled as Mayura Śarman, but his descendants had surnames ending with *varman* (which was for kṣatriya). In one inscription of the Gupta age, a brāhmaṇa minister had a surname with *datta* but his son took the surname of *dāsa*.[408] Thus it is clear that people did not care for this rule in naming their children.

The Purāṇa under consideration,[409] laying down more rules about naming the child, says that the name should not be void of meaning but it must contains some meaning. Secondly, it should not be indecent. Thirdly, it should not be either illomened or absurd or fearful. Fourthly, it should consist of even number of syllables. Fifthly, the name should not be too long nor too short nor too full of long vowels and sixthly, it should be easily articulated.

It is clear from some stories of the Purāṇa that some persons were named due to certain events or physical appearance. A king of Mithilā was named Mithi because he came out from the churning of the dead body of a king.[410] King Sagara was named such because he

was born with *gara* (*i.e.*, poison)[411] A son of queen Madayanti was named as Aśmaka because the queen had dashed her womb with a sharp stone and so a son was delivered. This child was thence called Aśmaka.[412] King Saudāsa was named as Kalmāṣapāda because once in anger he was prepared to curse the sage Vasiṣṭha but considering the sage as his *guru*, the king threw that water upon his own feet. Scalded by the heat which the water had derived from his angry imprecation, the feet of the king became spotted black and white and he hence obtained the name of Kalmāṣapāda. A sage had the name of Aṣṭāvakra because he had eight curves in his body.[413] Thus we mark that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to many rules regarding *nāmakaraṇa*. But these rules appear to be so lengthy and complicated that general people would hardly have followed all these rules in toto.

The *Chūḍākaraṇa* is another *saṁskāra*. The word *chūḍākaraṇa* means the cutting of hair on the child's head. Our Purāṇa only mentions this *saṁskāra* but does not give details of it. It is clear from other texts[414] that an suspicious time[415] is fixed and a place[416] is chosen for the performance of the *saṁskāra*. It is generally performed in the first or the third year, or at any age according to the tradition in the family.[417] The idea of preserving health can be marked in this *saṁskāra*. Charaka and Suśruta[418] lay much emphasis on cutting and dressing of hair, nails, beard for the preservation of health, beauty and happiness. Other purpose of this *saṁskāra*, according to a Gṛhya Sūtra,[419] is the achievement of long life for the recipient.

The *Upanapana saṁskāra*[420] is another *saṁskāra* whose antiquity goes to the vedic age.[421] The Purāṇa refers to the performance of this *saṁskāra* by Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and Sagara but the details of the *saṁskāra* are lacking in our text. Several texts speak of different ages for different varṇas[422] for the performance of this *saṁskāra*. On an ausupicious date[423] some relatives take the boy to the selected teacher. After a long ceremony, the teacher accepts the boy.[424] Then the teacher takes the charge of the student. With this ceremony the boy is accepted as a member of a group and of the spiritual life of the community to which his fore-fathers belong; and from now onwards, he has a right to know and learn the well-preserved sacred lore of the

community. The boy then enters into the *brahmacharyāśrama,*[425] *i.e.,* the first stage of life. In fact, *upanayana* appears as heralding the second birth of the individual,[426] the spiritual birth of the individual as a member of its cultural heritage. It is clear from this rite that the boy begins his studies of the vedas[427] for a certain period of years.

### *The Vivāha Saṁskāra*

The *vivāha* is another *saṁskāra* in Hindu society. It was fully developed social institution since the vedic age.[428] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* makes this *saṁskāra* very essential for the housholder's stage.[429] It gives several facts regarding the *vivāha saṁskāra* such as kinds of marriage, qualification of bride and bridegroom, the marriageable age, polygamy, etc.

### *Forms of Marriage*

Marriages, referred to in the Purāṇa,[430] are of eight forms, *i.e.,* Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa, Prajāpatya, Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākṣasa, and Paiśācha. But the Purāṇa does not explain them. All forms can easily be explained with the help of other Dharmaśāstras. The smṛtis have divided the eight methods of marriage into two groups, *i.e., apraśasta* or disapproved and *praśasta* or approved.

At first *apraśasta* forms of marriage will be discussed here. In the *Paiśācha* form, according to Manu,[431] a man cohibits with a girl in loneliness when she is sleeping, mad and intoxicated. So the deception of the girl in her insensible condition; and carrying her away fraudulently are the two essential features of this form. It was the most uncivilized and barbarous method of the marriage because it was based on seduction and force.

The *Rākṣasa* form is described as "the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home, while she cries and weeps, after her kinsmen have been slain or wounded and their houses broken."[432] It is capture of the bride by force. This form of marriage is based on forcible abduction of a maiden and the victor did not wait for the consent of the guardian or the girl herself. Our Purāṇa refers to many examples of this form. Śrī Kṛṣṇa[433] is said to have abducted Rukminī;

and Sāmba carried away a daughter of Duryodhana at the time of the latter's Svayaṁvara.[434] King Jyāmagha is also said to have abducted Vilochanā.[435]

In the *Āsura* form, a bridegroom gives money to the father or kinsmen of the bride.[436] So it was more or less purchase of the bride. This form of marriage seems to be better than *Paiśācha* and *Rākṣasa* where fraud and force were applied. Manu has discouraged this form[437] also. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇā*[438] refers to a story of Satyavatī and Ṛchīka in which we are told that father of Satyavatī demanded one thousand horses from the old Ṛchīka as the price of bride. Ṛchīka fulfilled the demand of the father of bride and he married her. This marriage can be taken as an example of *Asura* marriage. It appears that the practice of buying a wife was encouraged by old persons who contracted a second marriage.

In the *Gāndharva* form the mutual love and consent of the bride and bridegroom is the only condition required to bring about the union.[439] Neither the father nor the kinsmen need have a hand in bringing about the marriage. So it is based on love. The *Gāndharva* or love-marriage was also not an uncommon affair in the age of our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa states that once Buddha saw Ila and fell in love with the latter.[440] The marriage between Purūravā and Urvaśī is also an example of *Gāndharva* form.[441]

Here it should be mentioned that *Gāndharva* form should not be confused with the *Svayaṁvara*. The *Svayaṁvara* is another form of marriage in which bride used to choose her suitor in a gathering assembled for *Svayaṁvara*. In this form the selection of the suitor did not depend upon the choice of the bride, but upon the ability of the suitor to satisfy the specific conditions previously laid down. The Purāṇa refers to the *Svayaṁvara* of the princess of Kāśī[442] king and of the daughter of Duryodhana.[443] We are told in a story that king Māndhātā informed sage Saubhari that it was custom of the former's family that girls used to choose their suitor in the *Svayaṁvara*.[444] The reference to the *Svayaṁvara* of Sītā in *Dhanuṣayajña* is also mentioned in our Purāṇa.[445] Thus it was generally prevalent among the kṣatriyas. We also mark that there was no room for the previous love in this

form where as love had an important role in the *Gāndharva* form. In some cases of the former, the maiden's choice was restricted by the conditions attached to a *Svayaṁvara.* Moreover, the choice was confined to a panel of princes invited for *Svayaṁvara.* The girl did not necessarily know or see her suitor before the performance of *Svayaṁvara.*

In the *Ārṣa* form, the father of the bride is permitted to accept a cow and bull from his son-in-law for marriage.[446] Thus this form of marriage appears not to be based on purchase but on sham-purchase. The demand of a cow and bull cannot be taken as the price of bride. Evidently, it was not the bride-price, but there was consideration for the gift, though the father of the bride did not want to make a bargain out of it. The prevalence of the gift of a cow and bull in this marriage leads us to conclude that this form of marriage might have been prevalent in the agriculturist class.

In the *Daiva* form,[447] the girl was given as a part of the sacrificial fees to one of the priests after the sacrifice had been completed. It was well-known in society when the vedic sacrifices were popular. Other fact to be noticed is that this form of marriage might have been prevalent among rich and wealthy people of the upper three classes who had time and wealth to perform such sacrifices. But this form of marriage did not continue long. It might have disappeared with the decline of the vedic sacrifices.[448]

It is clear from several Dharmaśāstras[449] that in the *Brāhma* form, the maiden is given away to a suitor by her father. In it the initiative for marriage is taken by the father.[450] So the girl has no hand in the choice of her husband because this marriage depends upon the father or guardian only. This form appears to be free from the physical force, carnal appetite, impositions of condition and the lure of money. In the Purāṇa[451] we are told that Raivata was very anxious for settling the marriage of the daughter Revatī. Brahmā advises Raivata to give the hand of Revatī to Balarāma. Raivata followed his advice. This marriage can be taken as an example of this form.

In the *Prajāpatya* form, the father gives away his daughter to a suitor by saying a formula such as "may both of you perform together your duties." This form of marriage seems to be most satisfactory because here the rights of the husband and of the wife are well secured to a great extent.

*The Qualifications of Bride*

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to the qualifications of the bride and other requisites for the marriage in great detail.

*Caste Consideration*

By this period caste consideration had become the most important factor in determining marriages, and the tendency to preserve the purity of blood through marriages is distinctly marked. The Purāṇa[452] always lays emphasis on marrying a girl of own caste. Obviously, endogamy was in practice and restrictions were imposed on the intermixture of castes.

Besides caste, the family of bride was also considered. The Purāṇa says that one should not marry a bride who is of low or bad family.[453] That the term *Kula* is used to ascertain the purity of blood is clear from the law-books. The *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*[454] says that before settling a marriage, the purity of the family both on the side of the mother and the father should be ascertained. According to Manu, one who desires to raise his family to eminence should always endeavour to have marriage relations with the best family and never with the low.[455]

But the caste-system did not put much hindrance in marriage. It is clear from the Purāṇa that intercaste marriage was prevalent in that age. We have got several references to show that men married the girls belonging to other castes. Chyavana ṛṣi married Sukanyā, the daughter of king Śaryāta.[456] Jayadratha's wife was begotten on a brāhmaṇa girl by a kṣatriya male.[457] Yayāti, being a king, was married to Devayānī, the daughter of Śukrāchārya.[458] The sage Saubhari married the daughter of king Māndhāta.[459] The Purāṇa further says that in the Kali age in whatever family he may be born, a powerful

and rich man will be held entitled to espouse maiden of every caste.[460] Furthermore, there is also a reference to vṛṣalīpati[461] which stands for a brāhmaṇa having a śūdra wife. Historical evidences also support the existence of intercaste marriage in the pre-Gupta age. The brāhmaṇa king Agnimitra of the Śuṅga dynasty married a kṣatriya princess named Mālavikā.[462] This custom also continued in the Śaka-Sātavāhana age. The Sātavāhana king Gautamīputra, had accepted a Śaka bride for his son Vāśiṣṭhīputra Śātakarṇī.[463] An inscription of the Kuṣāṇa age discovered from Mathura shows that there was a matrimonial relation between iron-monger and the jeweller (*maṇikāra*).[464] Thus it is clear that even in the Kuṣāṇa[465] age the intercaste marriage was prevalent. Thus the study of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, supported by other evidences, shows that the intercaste marriage was prevalent in society. Though the brāhmaṇas and the kṣatriyas advocated in favour of the maintaining the purity of caste system, even then they married the girls of other castes and they violated the rules and regulations of the varṇa system.

The consideration of *sapiṇḍa* has also an important role in the settlement of marriage. The Purāṇa says that one should not marry a maiden who is in kin at least five degrees remote from her mother and seven degrees from her father. It show that our Purāṇa is not in favour of *sapiṇḍa* marriage. But there were a few people who violated this rule. Pradyumna, the son of Kṛṣṇa, married his maternal-uncle daughter Rukmavati,[466] Aniruddha, son of pradyumna, married his own nearest relation Subhadrā.[467]

Our Purāṇa, while refering to another qualification of bride, speaks of the consideration of complexion in the selection of bride. It does not allow a person to marry a girl who is of dark or yellow complexion.[468] Here we can get an idea of an aesthetic sense of our ancient thinker. But we can well imagine that a large section of dark-complexioned women, in the hot country like India, might have faced some difficulties in getting themselves suitably married. It is essential to point out that our Purāṇa does not place such colour restriction on male. The dark-complexioned men like Kṛṣṇa[469] could

marry several women. Thus it is clear that men and women have not been treated on the same footing in our Purāṇa.

Some girls were avoided on physical grounds. The Purāṇa says that one should not marry the bride who is from birth a cripple or deformed[470] or who croakes[471] like a crow or whose voice is hoarse[472] or whose eye sight is lost or who has circular eyes[473] or whose ankles are projected[474] or who has fat hands and feet[475] or who is a dwarf or very tall[476] or whose mouth is terrible.[477] Manu[478] has also given much emphasis on the consideration of bodily defects of bride. The consideration of the bodily defects of the bride in her marriage seems to be reasonable. A bride with bodily defects might not have been able to perform all the duties assigned to wife.

The Purāṇa further mentions that one should not marry a bride who is labouring under disease,[479] or who is suffering from jaundice,[480] or whose eyes are red.[481] These considerations lead us to conclude that disease was also a ground to reject a bride. Manu[482] also wants that one should not marry a bride who is sickly. Nārada,[483] too, considers the disease as a defect of a bride.

The Purāṇa mentions some other matters regarding the selection of the bride at the time of marriage. It advises the people to consider the character and nature of the bride before marriage. It opines that one should not marry a bride who is characterless,[484] who is vicious, or who talks improperly or who inherits some malady from her father or mother. So it may be marked that much emphasis has been laid on the character and nature of the bride. Several other texts[485] have also given much emphasis on character of the bride. It may be suggested that a women of bad character would have created a rift in conjugal life and unhappy atmosphere in the family. A women of good character is always regarded as an essential for building a strong society. So this idea might have compelled the ancient thinkers to advocate for the strong character of a woman.

Our Purāṇa has also a fancy for beauty in selecting a bride. It says[486] that a man should not marry a bride who has not too much hair, but is not without any, or who has masculine appearance or who has a beard or who has a hairy legs, or one who has dimples in

her cheeks when she laughs or one whose eye brows meet or whose teeth are far out. Other authorities have also regarded the beauty as a characteristic of the bride. The Gṛhya Sūtra[487] and even the smṛtis[488] also attach importance to the beauty in the selection of a bride. Thus it is clear that people might have been hankering after the beauty of a girl in the selection of a bride before the settlement of marriage.

*Consideration of Age*

The Purāṇa also throws lights on the age of the bride at the time of her marriage. It says that the age of the bride should be one-third of the bridegroom's age.[489] This naturally leads us to suppose that the age of the bride at the time of her marriage was low. The Purāṇa, at another place, informs us in a prophetic way that in the age of Kali, women would beget issue at the age of 5 or 7. It seems to be exaggeration; but it is reasonable to hold the view that child-marriage was prevalent in that age. It is, however, interesting to point out that we do not get examples of child-marriage in the stories of our Purāṇa. It appears that child-marriage was not in fact very popular in that age.

On the other hand, post-puberty marriage was fairly common. Several stories such as Uṣā's dream of her future husband,[490] Rukminī's abduction by Kṛṣṇa,[491] *Svayaṁvara* of Duryodhana's daugther[492] show that the post-puberty marriage was favoured in society.

*Polygamy*

Polygamy was is vogue since early times. During the Vedic period it was permitted.[493] The *Arthaśāstra*[494] of Kauṭilya and the Epic literature[495] also seem to have been acquainted with this custom. Our Purāṇa also refers to several polygamous marriages. It mentions that Dakṣa gave his ten daughters to Dharma, thirteen to Kaśyapa, four to Ariṣṭanemi and twenty-seven to Soma. Bahuputra and Aṅgiras each had many wives.[496] Sage Saubhari married many daughters of king Māndhātā.[497] It seems that even the brāhmaṇas used to keep many wives. This fact can be supported by the *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*[498]

which states that a brāhmaṇa should have three wives, a kṣatriya two, and a vaiśya one, besides one śūdra wife to all.

But polygamy was more common among the kings and the nobles. King's harems were always overcrowded with several beautiful and glamorous girls. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* several kings have been described as polygamous. Kings like Uttānapāda,[499] Yayāti,[500] Śaśi-vindu,[501] Vichitravīrya,[502] Kaṁsa[503] and others have been mentioned in the Purāṇa as having more than one wives. The *Mahābhārata* also allows the king to have a number of wives and this is no *Adharma*.[504] All these instances show that the passion of the kings to add to the number of their wives was unabated.

Thus it is clear from the study of the Purāṇa that this custom was generally prevalent among kings and nobles who had means to support many wives. But it was not confined to any particular caste. Even the brāhmaṇas, like sage Saubhari, kept many wives. It also appears that there was no limit on the number of wives. One could keep as many wives as desired.

*Polyandry*

The discussion of the marriage problem will not be complete without the discussion of polyandry. The antiquity of polyandry can be traced in the vedic[505] age. The Jātakas refer to the princess named Kanha who was married to 5 Pāṇḍava princes.[506] We are also informed by the Jātaka literature that Vaka and Pavarika the princes of Kāśī had a common wife.[507] The case of polyandrous marriage is also known in the Epic literature.[508]

The idea of polyandry can also be marked in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which gives only two references to this custom. It is mentioned in a story that princess Mariṣā was married to the Pracheta brothers.[509] We are further told that Draupadī had five husbands and each of them bore a son on her.[510] These instances cannot be regarded as new because they have already been referred to in the *Mahābhārata*.[511] Thus it is clear that this custom was not very popular in society.

*Antyeṣṭi Saṁskāra*

This is the last *saṁskāra* to be mentioned here. Its antiquity can be marked in the vedic age but at that time it was not very complicated.[512] But coming to the age of the Sūtra literature we find its complicated form.[513] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also shows its acquaintance with this *saṁskāra*.[514] It says that having washed the corpse with holy water, decorated it with garlands, the corpse should be burnt outside the village. Here we do not finds the details of the bier, the removal of corpse and funeral procession as found in several ancient texts.[515] Then the kinsmen, having bathed with their clothes on, are to offer libations to the deceased, addressing him by name.[516] The details of the offering of water to the dead can also be marked in other texts.[517] It reminds us the primitive belief according to which the dead persons were supposed to appear as birds.[518]

The Purāṇa states that the mourners should enter the village at the sun-set or on the appearance of stars. The Gṛhya Sūtra literature[519] also bears testimony to the same fact.

Then the period of aśaucha of defilement begins. Our Purāṇa[520] gives passing reference to it but its details can be found in several other texts.[521] The Purāṇa says that the term of impurity of a brāhmaṇa is ten days; for a kṣatriya twelve; for a vaiśya half a month; and a whole month for a śūdra.[522] This fact can also be corroborated by the Smṛti literature.[523] Thus it is clear that all castes have not been placed on equal footing. Here it may be suggested that such distinction in the period of impurity appears to point out the gradation between different castes in which the brāhmaṇas occupy superior position. It also shows differences among all the four castes.

The observance of the rules of defilement for relatives and friends is optional in the Gṛhya Sūtras.[524] But the Dharmaśutras and Smṛits[525] make it compulsory for mourners. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also refers to the rules to be observed during the *aśaucha* period. It states that the moruners should take meal without meat.[526] During the period of *aśaucha*, gifts, acceptance, sacrifice and sacred study are suspended.[527] The other rules for the *aśaucha* period are to sleep on the

ground,[528] and to eat only in day time.[529] The ceremony that follows the cremation is the *asthi chayana*[530] or the "collection of bones." The Gṛhya Sūtras[531] contain a very detailed account of the ceremony. In this custom the dead body was burnt, but, in order to preserve the old traditions the remains of bones began to be collected and buried after a few days. The *asthi chayana* ceremony can also be marked in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* which says that on the fourth day the ashes and bones should be collected; after which the body of one connected with the deceased may be touched.[532] It may be regarded as a primitive belief which continued even in the age of our Purāṇa. After this ceremony the mourners were considered as pure.

Thus the foregoing discussion shows that the Purāṇa has referred to the same fact regarding the *saṁskāras* as found in other ancient texts. It may be suggested that the Purāṇa, by laying emphasis on the performance of *saṁākāras*, tries to strengthen Hindu society.

*Family Circle and Relations*

Since the vedic period the patriarchal family was the basis of social life. Father and mother had absolute control over their children as it is evident from the rudiments of Śunaḥśepa story in the *Ṛgveda.*[533] The family discipline was pretty strict, as is evident from the winding of Ṛjrāśva by his father.[534] The joint family system also prevailed in the vedic age.[535] The family circle was very large. In the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇa literature we meet with the same picture of family life of this period as in the preceding one. The Gṛhya Sūtra literature[536] also gives ample light on the joint-family. The senior-most member was the head of the family. He had to take care for all member of his family. The joint family system was prevalent in the days of Patañjali.[537]

This system also prevailed in the age of our Purāṇa, which refers to the members of family of various status. Father held an important position in family. His orders were to be obeyed by his sons as it is clear from the story of Prahlāda.[538] The father also used to punish his sons severely as it is also obvious from the same story.[539] Several texts[540] also refers to the punishment given to son by father. It is clear

from the Purāṇa that the father had full control over his son.[541] Usually the father used to love his son.[542] Sometimes father used to give up his son as it is clear from a story that Ikṣvāku gave up Vikukṣi because the latter had eaten the flesh of hare which was kept for the *śrāddha*[543] ceremony. Father held the most venerable position in the family. The Purāṇa says that father is the most venerable of all holy teachers[544] and is a venerable instructor[545] and is ever to be devoutly reverenced and of all venerable preceptors, a father is most venerable.[546] The reason, for showing such importance of father in the age of our Purāṇa, is not far to seek. We have already seen that there was the rise of the heretical doctrines in the age of our Purāṇa. Many people were violating the rules of the *varṇāśramadharma*. This had given a great shock to the brahmanical society. In order to strengthen the Hindu society the *Gṛhasthāśrama* was given great importance. Father had got much importance in householder's life. Hence the Purāṇa, by fabricating several stories, appears to have laid much emphasis on the venerable position of father in family. For this reason the deserters of parent hace been highly condemned in our Purāṇa.[547]

Son held important position since vedic age,[548] The *Mahābhāruta* refers to the necessity of a son in the family.[549] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also lays emphasis on the importance of son, and it states that king Vena was saved by his pious son Pṛthu, from going to hell called "*put*".[550] So there was a belief that son, through his pious deed, would protect his father from going to hell. The Purāṇa also believes that sons, who are born from the parental loins, rescue their progenitor from the region of Yama.[551] Similar idea can also be found in other ancient texts.[552] We have already seen that the rise of heretical doctrine brought disorder in the brahmanical society. Many people neglected *Gṛhasthāśrama*. So the Purāṇa, by various ways tries to establish this *āśrama* in society and hence, it attaches much importance to son. To have a son is only possible in *Gṛhasthāśrama* which is the back-bone of *varṇāśramadharma*. The Purāṇa appears to have attached religious importance to son in family. People might have been afraid of the torture of hell. So they might not have renunciated the world without having a son.

It is further clear from the Purāṇa that sonless parents were always anxious for having a son. King Yuvanāśva was always very unhappy because he had no son.[553] Kings like Bharata,[554] Sīradhvaja[555] and others were also very desirous of having sons. Other texts also corroborate this fact. The *Mahābhārata*[556] mentions that Yavanāśva, being sonless, gave up his entire empire and went to a forest. The *Rāmāyana* also refers to king Daśaratha who performed many sacrifices for having a son.[557] In the *Raghuvaṁśa*,[558] king Dilīpa has been depicted as very much desirous of having a son. We are also told in the *Kādambarī*[559] that when Vilāśavatī, the queen of Tārāpīda, learnt that there is no best heaven for a sonless parent then she plunged into grief.

We are further told in the Purāṇa that sages performed sacrifices for procuring a son for sonless king Yuvanāśva.[560] Gārgya also practised hard penance to have a son.[561] Manu, with a desire for having a son, performed the Mitra-varuṇa sacrifices.[562] Sīradhvaja is said to have ploughed the land of sacrifice for having a son.[563] King Bharata, being sonless, also performed a sacrifice called *Marutsoma* sacrifice for the same purpose.[564] Even in other texts we also find that people performed sacrifices for the procurement of sons.[565] The *Rāmāyaṇa* tells us that through the performance of sacrifice king Daśaratha was blessed with four sons.[566] The *Mahābhārata*[567] also contains the similar reference to it.

The Purāṇa refers to only two kinds of sons, *i.e.*, *kānīna*[568] and *apaviddha*.[569] It says that during the maidenhood Kuntī begot a son from Sūrya and that son was named as Karṇa and he was regarded as *kānīna putra*.[570] Manu clearly says that when an unmarried girl begets a son in her father's house then that son is called *kānīna*.[571] There is reference to another kind of son, *i.e.*, *apaviddha*,[572] who is not to be invited in *śrāddha*. It shows that *apaviddha* has very low position in the society. According to Manu,[573] when parents give up their son and if that son is accepted by others then that son is called *apaviddha*. Our Purāṇa does not refer to other kinds of son but other texts[574] refer to 12 kinds of son but the enumeration of such kinds of son is not essential here.

Our Purāṇa also refers to other members of family of various status. The family group included brother (*bhrātā*,[575] *bandhu*[576]) and his sons (*bhrātṛsantati*[577]). The daughter's son (*dauhitra*[578]) and grand son (*pautra*[579]) and great grand-son[580] were fairly important members of the family. The family circle was not confined only to them but it was large to a great extent. The relations on the in-laws side included the parents-in-law (śvaśura[581]-śvaśrū[582]). They also got respect in society as it is clear from our Purāṇa that in the Kali age people would respect their parents-in-law more than their parents.[583] The wife's brother[584] has been also referred to in the Purāṇa. The grand-fathers, as mentioned in the Purāṇa, included grand-father (*pitāmaha*),[585] great grand-father (*prapitāmaha*)[586] and maternal grand-father.[587] The parents (*mātā*,[588] *pitā*[589]) were also members of the family. Husband (*pati*,[590] *bhartṛ*[591]), wife (*kalatra*,[592] *bhāryā*[593]), son (*suta*,[594] *putra*[595]), daughter (*tanayā*,[596] *sutā*[597]) and daughter-in-law (*snuṣā*[598]) were also considered as the members of the family. The maternal uncle (*mātula*[599]) is found mentioned in the Purāṇa.

*The Position of Women*

The position, which women occupied in the Vedic age, was fairly satisfactory.[600] In the *Ṛgveda*, we find that "the wife on her marriage was at once given an honoured position in the house; she is emphatically a mistress in her husband's house."[601] Regard for her begins to diminish in the later Saṁhitās and in the Brāhmaṇa literature. One Saṁhitā classes her with dice and drink as one of the three evils, and she is even declared to be the very untruth and the embodiment of calamity.[602] Early Buddhist literature does not regard her with much respect and Buddha is shown very unwillingly admitting her to the Buddhist Order which consequently led to the formation of a separate Order of nuns.[603] The wicked nature of a women is frequently mentioned in the Jātakas.[604] The position of women deteriorated in the age of the early Dharma Sūtra works, and they had a position of dependence,[605] and were even charged with serious moral defects.[606] Altekar tells us that deliberate attempts were made to blacken the character of women from about the beginning of the Christian era.[607]

The same deteriorating condition of women can also be marked in our Purāṇa, which states that in the Kali age women will be fickle, short of stature, gluttonous; they will have many children, and little means; scratching their heads with both hands, they will pay no attention to the commands of their husband or parents and they will be selfish, abject and slatterly. The Purāṇa further adds that they will be scolds and liars, they will be indecent and immoral in their conduct and will ever attach themselves to disallurement. This is the picture of women in Kali age and it shows their deteriorating condition.

The reason, for the deteriorating condition of women in the age of our Purāṇa, is obvious. The study of the Purāṇa clearly shows the intermixture of foreign races like the Yavanas, the Śakas and others in the brāhmaṇical society. Inter-caste marriage was prevalent in society.[608] This might have caused disorder in the brāhmaṇical society. This might have affected the condition of women. The rise of the heretical sects or anti-vedic doctrines affected the women section of society. Women began to embrace these doctrines. This also gave a shock to the brāhmaṇical society. The rise of the śūdras to the status of kings also appears to have been detrimental to the brāhmaṇical society in general and women in particular. The śūdra kings like the Nandas cared very little for the *varṇāśrama dharma*, and married women of higher varṇas. But the Purāṇakāra does not appear as sitting idle. He attaches much importance to chaste and dutiful wives in society.

Some other aspects of women can also be marked in the Purāṇa under review which represents a woman as a wife, but it does not give detail about the duties of wife. A few references to it can be found in the Purāṇa. In the story of Nidāgha, we are told that the wife of Nidāgha prepared food for a guest.[609] Thus it is clear that wife used to perform household duties. Manu also assigns some household duties to wife and he observes that she should undertake the management of household affairs, collection and expenditure of her husband's wealth, preparing for food, keeping everything clean in the house, and fulfilling all the *dharma* obligations.[610] The details of other

household duties of wife have been discussed in several Dharmaśāstras.[611]

Another imporatant duty of wife was to render service to her husband. Our Purāṇa, laying much emphasis on this point, mentions that a woman has only to honour her husband in act, thought, and speech, to reach the same region to which he is elevated; and she, thus, accomplishes her object without any great exertion.[612] The importance of rendering services to husband by wife can be clearly marked in the story of king Śatadhanu. King Śatadhanu was always helped by his wife in every birth.[613] The *Mahābhārata*, too, outlines similarly the duties and the attitude of the wife to the husband. In this Epic, Bhiṣma reports a conversation between two women Sumanā and Sāṇḍili. The former wanted to know by want penances the latter was able to attain celestial region. Sāṇḍili replied that it was not by virtue of any hard penance at all; but, by virtue of her obedience, devotion to her husband she was able to achieve paradise.[614] Several other references to the wife's devotion to her husband[615] can be marked in the epic literature. The reason, for associating much importance to rendering service to husband, is not far to seek. We have marked the deteriorating condition of women in the age of our Purāṇa. So our Purāṇa, in order to establish varṇāśrama dharma, lays importance to this duty of a wife. It also shows the hope of getting a heaven to the woman who renders services to her husband. By fabricating stories such as Śatadhanu[616] and Śaivyā, Mahādeva and Umā,[617] the Purāṇakāra tries to show the association between wife and husband in all births.

*Immunity from Capital Punishment*

The killing of a woman was regarded as a very disgraceful offence since very early times.[618] The epics[619] are dead against killing of a woman. Manu[620] has prescribed the capital punishment for the offence of killing of a woman. Our Purāṇa also condemns killing a woman. In the story of Pṛthu, we are told that king Pṛthu once chased Pṛthivī for killing her. The Pṛthivī asked the king "know you not, king of men, the sin of killing a female, that you thus perseveringly seek to slay me."[621] The king replied, "when the happiness of

many is secured by the destruction of one malignant being, the death of that being is an act of virtue."[622] Thus it is clear that generally women were not killed; but wicked women were punished severely. The Purāṇa, at another place, says that a man should not treat a woman with disrespect, nor show envy to them, nor discard them.[623]

*The Satī System*

The custom of the sacrifice of the widow at the funeral of her husband was widely prevalent in by-gone ages.[624] At that time people were war-like tribes. After the death of the husband, a wife might not have felt secured. So women would have preferred to die voluntarily after her husband's death. In the Vedic age the self-immolation of the widow was then an ancient custom which began to fall out of practice.[625] It is clear that when the Aryan settled in India, they became civilized; and they might have regarded the satī system a barbarous one. In the Vedic age they were in minority in India, so they felt need to increase their population in order to strengthen their strong hold in India. But this custom, however, appears again at about 300 B.C. In the early centuries of the Christian era the practice was gradually gaining popularity.[626] The Epic[627] literature and the smṛtis[628] are also replete with the references to it.

The practice can also be found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which contains several references to this custom. Śaivyā, the queen of Śatadhanu, is reported to have ascended on the funeral pyre of her husband.[629] We are told that after the death of Kṛṣṇa, his queens embraced the dead body of Kṛṣṇa and entered the funeral fire.[630] Revati, also embracing the corpse of Balarāma, entered the flaming pile.[631] The queen of king Bahu, after the death of her husband, constructed pyre, and ascended on it with the determination of accompanying her husband in death. But the sage Aurva forbade her from this act of self-immolation. The sage advised the queen not to think of committing so disperate act and accordingly in obedience to his injunction, the queen relinquished her intention. The main reason behind it was that the queen was pregnant at that time, so the sage dissuaded her from this act.[632] The above mentioned cases, therefore, suggest that it was prevalent in the kṣatriya caste. There is only one

reference to a brāhmaṇa widow who, after the death of her husband, entered the flames.

The reason that led to the continuation of the *satī* custom in the age of our Purāṇa (*i.e.*, between 1st century A.D. to early part of 4th century A.D.) can only be suggested. By that time many foreign tribes had already attacked India. They were menace to Hindu culture. Widows might not have felt secure and protected in the society. So women preferred to immolate themselves after the death of their husbands.

*The Levirate or Niyoga*

The levirate or *niyoga* system was an unique feature of ancient Indian society. The issueless women procured sons by persons, appointed for the same purpose. This custom was prevalent even in the Vedic society.[633] The *Mahābhārata*,[634] the *Arthaśāstra*[635] and several Dharmaśāstras[636] are replete with the instances of this custom.

This custom was also in existence in the age of our Purāṇa. We are told in a story that Māriṣā was a daughter of Pramlochā, begotten by sage Kaṇḍu, Soma and Vāyu.[637] It shows that more than one persons procreated progeny on a woman. In another story we find that on the request of king Mitra Saha, sage Vasiṣṭha raised an issue on queen Madayantī, the wife of the former.[638] Their issue was prince Aśmaka.[639] It is again stated that Dharma, Vāyu and Indra procured sons on Kuntī.[640] The twin Aśvins raised two sons on Mādrī.[641] Sage Dīrghatamā begot 5 sons on the queen of king Bali.[642] Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana is said to have raised two issues on the queens of Vichitravīrya and also a son upon a female servant.[643] Further there is a reference to an issueless Yavana king, on whose queen the sage Gārgya raised a son. The son was named as Kālayavana.[644]

The study of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* shows that sometimes more than one persons were appointed for the procreation of sons. During the husband's life-time, the procreation of the son by the *niyoga* system was also prevalent. Sometimes husbands like Mitra Saha used to request priest to raise sons on the former's wife. It is also to be noted that issueless women could procure son through this custom.

The number of such procreation of sons was not limited. The Purāṇa refers to the prevalence of this custom in the kṣatriya or kingly class. So it may be presumed that this custom was prevalent in the second privileged caste, *i.e.*, the kṣatriya to a great extent. It is also clear from the Purāṇa that the brāhmaṇas could beget sons on the kṣatriya women.

*Seclusion of Women*

Now the problem of seclusion of women is to be considered here. In the early period of ancient Indian history women used to move in the society freely. The *purdā* system does not appear to have been prevalent in the Vedic age.[645] In the Gṛhya and Dharma Sūtras there is no reference to any veil for women when moving in public.[646] There was practically no *purdā* system during the age of the epic.[647] The *Rāmāyaṇa*[648] does not seem to be in favour of this custom. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the *purdā* was quite unknown down to about the beginning of the Christian era.[649]

Our Purāṇa, a few portions of which might have been compiled in the beginning of Christian era, does not speak of the *purdā* system. Some instances from the Purāṇa suggest that women could move freely in society without veil. We are told in a story that many women of all grades went to witness the wrestling between Kṛṣṇa and the boxers appointed by Kaṁsa. A separate platform was constructed for women, and from where they could easily witness the wrestling.[650] Besides, it is also mentioned that some women like Satyabhāmā used to travel on chariot without veil. The *apsarās*, like Urvaśī[651] used to move on the earth freely and they were not confined to the wall of seclusion. Purūravā saw Urvaśī and fell into love with her. All men could see beauty[652] of the *apsarās*. The prevalence of *svayaṁvara* in the age of our Purāṇa further strengthens the non-existence of the *purdā* system in that age. In the *svayaṁvara*, we have seen, brides used to choose their bridegroom. The Purāṇa also refers that the old sage Saubhari went to the palace of king Māndhātā and the former selected many princesses for his marriage.[653] All these instances suggest that women did not use *purdā* during the age of the compilation of our Purāṇa.

The contemporary literary works further support the non-existence of *purdā* system in the age of our Purāṇa. In Bhāsa's *Svapnavāsava dattā* (C. A.D. 200-300) Padmāvatī does not observe any veil during her maidenhood, but after her marriage she does not like that her husband should receive the ambassador from Ujjayinī in her presence. The king, however, over rules her objection, pointing out that the noblemen of the society would feel offended, if the purdā was observed in their presence.[654] Aśvaghoṣa refers to brides as narrowing down their eyes in shyness but he does not refer to veil on their face.[655] Thus upto the age of Kuṣāṇas the *purdā* system was not prevalent in the society and ladies enjoyed considerable freedom.[656]

The contemporary sculptures also do not reveal the use of veil. The use of veil is not shown in the Bharhut sculptures.[657] The sculptures at Sanchi, in central India, show that women of the 2nd century B.C. could see a procession from the balconies of their houses without covering their faces with veils.[653] We also come across a sculpture where women and men are participating in a worship and women are not seen wearing any veils.[659] The early sculptures of Mathura[660] and Gandhara[661] schools also do not represent women with veils.

## *Food and Drinks*

The Purāṇa under review contains materials for an important chapter on the history of food and drinks in ancient India. The evidence, adduced by the Purāṇa on this subject, is exhaustive with vegetarian and non-vegetarian items, solid and liquid food, arrange-ments for meals, milk preparations, sweet, wines, and fruits, and even dinner etiquette rules.

*Vegetarian Food*: A vegetarian had to depend exclusively on grains and vegetables for his staple food, though there was a wider choice of alternative. From the very beginning, people used different kinds of cereals in ancient India. The Vedic people[662] also used diffe-rent kinds of food grains. The Jātakas[663] and Gṛhya Sūtra[664] are also replete with the references to different kinds of grains and seeds.

The references to foodgrains in our Purāṇa are merely illustrative and not exhaustive. Only cereals, primarilly associated with-*yajña*, are mentioned here. The grains,[665] as found in the Purāṇa,[666] must have been used in food also. These are *vrīhi* (a short of rice), *yava* (barley), *godhūma* (wheat), *anu* (a kind of rice), *nīvāra*, *gavedhuka*, *markaṭa* (maize). Some other foodgrains are *tila* (sesamum indicum), *priyaṅgu*, *hyudāra* (*jvara*), *koradūṣā* (*kodo* in Hindi), *satīnika*, *śyāmā* (*Samva* in Hindi). The auxiliary edible, popularly known as pulses included *mudga*, *māṣā*, *sakulatthaka*, *masūra*, *aḍhakya*, *chanakā*, etc.

*Prepared food* : Many kinds of food were prepared by cooking since the vedic age.[667] In the age of Purāṇa, several kinds of cooked food were prepared.

*Kulmāṣa*, mentioned in the Purāṇa,[668] can be taken as the cooked food for poor and low class of people. The Jātaka literature mentions it as the coarse food for the poor workman.[669] Charaka mentions it as a steamed food, heavy to digest and dry in effect.[670] The *Nirukta* also regards it as an inferior food.[671] P.K. Gode[672] takes it as *ghughrī* in Hindi. *Kulmāṣa* seems to be a coarse thick gruel prepared by stewing beans, maize or any inferior grain in a covered vessel with a little water and also adding *guḍa* and oil to it. *Pāyasa* (*khīra* in Hindi), another food article was offered to guest.[673] It was prepared by mixing rice, milk and sweet. *Vāṭya*, a prepared food, was offered to guest[674] but it was not included in the list of good food. *Saṁyāva*, another prepared food mentioned in the Purāṇa, is offered to guest.[675] Kulluka[676] explains *saṁyāva* as a sweet preparation made with *ghṛta*, milk, sweet and wheat flour. The *Suśruta*[677] includes it among confectionaries. *Apūpa*, a sweet cooked food, was offered to a guest.[678] It was a sweet cake made flour of wheatand ghee as it is prepared even now. *Yāvaka* was not included in the list of good-food.[679] It was one of the items of prepared food.[680] It is clear from the *Mahābhāṣya*[681] that *yāvaka* was made by poundin barley with pestle and mortar to remove the chaft, and then boiling its pearl grain in water or in milk with sugar added to it. The *Arthaśāstra* holds that prepared *yāvaka* must weight twice the original quantity of barley cooked. *Bhakta*, the boiled rice, is also a

cooked food in the Purāṇa.[682] It was a favourite food even in the vedic age[683] and thereafter.[684] *Saktu*, an important and popular item of food since the vedic age,[685] has also been mentioned in the Purāṇa. It is clear from the text that it was also offered to the guest,[686] and was included even in the meal of a householder.[687] Other texts acquaint us with the mixing of water with *saktu*.[688] The Mathura Stone inscription of Huviṣka [689] (dated year 28 =A.D. 106) also refers to *saktu* in the menu of food. It also formed an item of food in the age of the Kuṣāṇas.[690]

*Fruits and Vegetables* : The fruits and vegetables were also included in the items of food in ancient India. Different kinds of fruits were used by the vedic people.[691] The fruits, mentioned in the Purāṇa, are *jambu*[692] (rose apple), *nārikela*[693] (coconut) and *badarī phala.*[694] These are only a few fruits mentioned in our Purāṇa, but there might have been certainly other fruits as well. The Purāṇa mentions the root, fruits, as diet of people in the Kali age.[695] In the beginning fruits and roots also constituted the food of the people.[696] The followers of *vānaprasrhāśrama* had to take fruits along with leaves, roots as their diet.[697]

The *Śāka* (leafy vegetable), also an article of food in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*,[698] has been mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[699] which prescribes the *śuṣka śāka* (dried leafy vegetable) for a house-holder[700]

The Purāṇa contains references to many vegetables,[701] such as, *alāmbu* (*kaddu* in Hindī), *gṛñjana* (*gājara* in Hindi), *palāṇḍu* (*pyāja* in Hindi), *piṇḍa mūlaka* (*salajam* in Hindi). It is clear from the text that the use of these vegetables was strictly prohibited in the *śrāddha*. It appears that people used these vegetables in their usual meal. Like modern age, onion might have been included into the non-vegetarian diet but the Purāṇa is not clear on this point.

*Sweets* : Sweets were also included in the menu of food article in ancient India. Honey, a kind of sweet item of food, is mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[702] *Guḍa* was also included in the item of sweet.[703] It is molasses, an universal product of sugarcane juice. *Phaṇita*, mentioned as delicious food in the Purāṇa,[704] was another kind of sweet. It

was often offered to guest as it is clear from the story of Nidāgha.[705] *Phaṇita* denotes inspissated juice of sugarcane boiled down to thick consistency, a preparation now called *rāb*, from which after crystalisation sugar is prepared[706] It must be mentioned here that the Purāṇa. lays down certain rules for taking the sweets that a householder is to take sweet food first at the time of meal.[707] It assigns a hell to him who takes sweets alone[708] and it further says that sweets are not to be taken without offering them to brāhmaṇas.[709]

*Milk and Milk Products* : Milk and its products were chief articles of food of the vedic people.[710] These articles also continued in later age.[711] The Purāṇa acquaints us with different words for milk[712] such as *kṣīra, dūgdha, payaḥ*. It also contains reference to cow-milk and other animals-milk. It knows the use of the milk of she-goats in the Kali age.[713] The milk of she-camel, ewe, deer, she-buffalo were not used in the *śrāddha* function.[714] As nowadays the people might have utilized the milk of she-buffalo in the age of the Purāṇa.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to *gavya*[715] which stands for milk and other products. It is well-acquainted with many milk products like *ghee* (*ghṛtaṁ*),[716] curd (*dadhī*),[717] *dadhimaṇḍa*[718] (*matha* in Hindi), and *sarpi*[719] (clarified butter).

*Drinks* : Different kinds of wine were taken by people since the vedic age[720] and thereafter.[721] The use of wine can be marked in our Purāṇa which refers to many kinds of wine such as *sura*,[722] *soma*,[723] *madira*.[724] There was a general tendency to regard *surā* as an evil. The Purāṇa assigns a hell to those who drink *surā* (*surāpā*).[725] The sale of *soma* was highly condemned in the society.[726] But the *soma* was offered to God as we find in the Purāṇa that it was offered to Indra in a sacrifice.[727] It is clear that it was associated with God. But it was not much respected in society. At one place in our Purāṇa we are informed that a dealer in *soma* was not to be invited to the *śrāddha*.[728] *Madirā* was another kind of wine which was generally used by kings or aristocratic people. We find that kings[729] and aristocrat like Balarāma were fond of wine-drinking. Balarāma,[730] in intoxicated condition, has been described in the Purāṇa. The use of wine-drinking in the age of our Purāṇa can be corroborated by some

archaeological evidences. The Sanchi *toraṇa* sculptures[731] depict many scenes of wine drinking. Many scenes of Bacchanalian group have been represented in the sculptures of the Kuṣāṇa period[732] at Mathura. In these scenes men, sometimes even women, are shown holding wine-cups in their hands. Some person have been depicted in intoxicated condition also.

*Amṛta* is a divine drink in the *Ṛgveda* and in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.*[733] *Amṛta,* as purely a drink of immortality, is mentioned by the *Gītā.*[734] Its conception as a celestial drink of immortality is also found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* It is clear from the story of the churning of the ocean that gods and Daityas were hankering after *Amṛta.*[735] The Daityas at first took away the *kamaṇḍala* from the hands of Dhanvantari, which was full of nector. But Viṣṇu got success in bringing back the pot full of nector. Gods, after taking it, got a new vigour and energy and they defeated the Daityas.[736]

*Non-Vegetarian Diet* : Meat-eating was prevalent in Vedic age[737] and thereafter. The *Gṛhya Sūtras*[738] have considerable evidences for flesh as one of the common articles of food of the people. The Dharmaśāstra works[739] contain numerous rules regarding the flesh eating. We find in the Jātakas[740] that fish and meat had a flourishing market and there were slaughters houses. It was also clear from the edicts of Aśoka[741] that in the beginning thousands of animals were killed in the royal kitchen and the great emperor was moved with pity, and he determined to check this state of thing.

There is a good deal of material on flesh-eating in our Purāṇa. The use of meat in *śrāddha* was considered very meritorious and details regarding the nature of its merit are given.[742] The fleshes of hare, hog, goat, antelope, deer, gayal, sheep were offered to gods in the *śrāddha*. The use of flesh in the *śrāddha* can also be confirmed by a story in which we are told that king Ikṣvāku required flesh for the performance of *śrāddha*[743] and deputed his son Vikukṣi for bringing it but the latter ate the flesh of hare which was for the *śrāddha.* The remaining meet was presented to Vasiṣṭha. It shows that even priests used to take flesh during the performance of sacrifice. In

another story we are told that during the twelve years' famine Triśaṅku provided the flesh of deer for the nourishment of the wife and children of Viśvāmitra.[744] The Purāṇa refers to fishermen,[745] hunter,[746] fowler,[747] cow-slaughter (*govadhakarttāraḥ*)[748] implying thereby that the wide prevalence of the practice of meat-eating had given rise to professionals who sought their livelihood by killing various animals and supplying their meat to the people.

Our Purāṇa puts some restrictions on the use of flesh. It recommends the use of flesh only in day time during the *śrāddha* ceremony.[749] The Purāṇa further prohibits meat-eating on certain days like *chaturdaśī, aṣṭamī, amāvāsyā, pūrṇimā, sūrya saṁkrānti* and prescribes a hell for those who take meat on the above-mentioned days.[750] We can suggest that the Purāṇa does not put ban on meat-eating. Even the two higher privileged castes also used to take meat. It was also offered to gods in the sacrifice.

*Table-manners or Dinner Etiquette* : Much importance has been attached to food etiquette in ancient India. Several materials regarding dinner etiquette are found in the Vedic literature.[751] There were a few tabooes for the articles of food in the age of Saṁhitās[752] and Upaniṣads.[753] Very much importance has been attached to the numerous injuctions and tabooes about food in the Dharmaśāstra works.

Our Purāṇa also deals with many problems regarding the dinner etiquette such as how many times to be eaten; the kinds of food and drinks allowed or forbidden; flesh eating and drinking wine; and ceremonies before taking food, at the time of taking it and after taking it. The Purāṇa frames rules for taking food at first a householder must provide food for dependents and helpless members of his family and then he may take his meal.[754] It further remarks that he, who eats without feeding them, is guilty of sin in this life and when he dies is condemned in hell.[755] So a householder is not allowed to take food without offering the food to his dependents. Their proper care is necessary so such rules have been framed for feeding them first.

The Purāṇa further lays down rules as to how a householder should eat, so that in eating no sin may be incurred, invariable health and increased vigour may be secured, and all evils and hostile machination may be averted.[756] It says that one should take food after taking bath[757] but it condemns those who take meal without taking bath.[758] The idea behind this rule is to keep the people clean. It is the horror of hell which might have compelled the people to follow the rules and regulations of cleanliness.

The performance of *japa, homa* and *tarpaṇa* appears to be essential before taking meal. The Purāṇa[759] condemns those who take meal without performing *homa, japa* and *tarpaṇa.* It seems probable to hold the view that religion was the part and parcel of Indian life and so these rules were framed only to infuse the religious sentiment and piety among the people.

The Purāṇa, further, ordains that having dressed with clean clothes, perfumed and wearing garland of flowers, the householders should take meal.[760] The main idea, behind this provision, was to keep the persons fresh at the time of meal. It is clear from the Purāṇa that one should take meal fronting the east or the north[761]. Several Dharmaśāstras,[763] giving light on this problem, mention that one should face the east while taking the food. The *Vāmana Purāṇa,*[763] like the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* disallows the south and west directions for this purpose. But Manu[764] allows all four directions for it, so it means that one who eats facing any one of these directions secures the benefit specified. We do not know whether the fronting any direction at the time of meal has any effect on human body or not.

Laying emphasis on the preparation of food properly, our Purāṇa says that food should not be procured from a vile person nor by improper means nor improperly cooked.[765] The Purāṇa also advises a householder to take food in clean handsom vessel.[766] But it does not mention the metal of vessel used for meal. Vedavyāsa[767] opines that the vessel for meal-purpose should be of gold, silver, copper, lotus or palasa leaves. Other authorities[768] also lay down different rules regarding the vessel for meal. The Purāṇa, further, speaks that one must not take food which is placed upon chair or

bed.[769] The householder is not advised to take his meal in an unfit place or out of season, or in an incommodious attitude.[770] Other Dharmaśāstras[771] also speak of places which are prohibited for taking meal. We are told in our Purāṇna that the food should be made with suitable taste, and it should be good of its kind and it mast not be stale.[772] This rule is not applicable to fruit, any vegetable substances and molasses. A man is not to eat the juices which have been extracted. The Purāṇa further says that a man must eat so as to leave no residue of his meal, except in the case of flour, cakes, honey, water, curds and butter. The order of the food to be taken up is that one should, with an attentive mind, first taste that which has a sweet flavour; he may take salt and sour things in the middle course, and finish with those which are pungent and bitter.[773] We further read in the Purāṇa that the man, who commences his meal with fluids, then takes solid food, and finishes with fluids again will ever be strong and healthy.[774] Several Dharmaśāstras[775] also lay down various rules regarding the order in which items of food are to be eaten. Thus it is evident that such rules were framed from the hygienic point of view. The Purāṇa porhibits the taking of stale food and allows to take tasteful, delicious and energyful foods. A householder has also been advised by the Purāṇa to take meal silently or without uttering a word.[776] Other Dharmaśāstras,[777] too, lay emphasis on this fact. We may suggest that the reason behind it is to keep the person attentive at the time of taking his meal. After taking his meal, one has to rinse his mouth, theeth and hands with water.[778] The idea of cleanliness was behind this rule. In ancient India the rinsing of mouth was only to protect teeth and to keep the mouth clean. The washing of hand with water was only due to the fact that people generally took their meal with the help of their fingers.

The Purāṇa,[779] then, mentions a prayer to be repeated after meal. It says that with a pleased and tranquil spirit a householder is then to take a seat and call to memory his titulary deity, and then he is to pray the god. Having repeated the prayer, the householder has been advised to rub his stomach with his hands. It is clear that the repetition of prayer after meal is only to infuse the religious senti-

ment into people. The Purāṇa refers to two meals, *i.e.*, one should be taken in day[780] after taking bath and another in night before going to sleep.[781] Other taxts[782] also mention that one should take only two meals every day. The *Gobhila*[783] *Smṛti* adds that the evening meal may be taken till one *prahara* and a half after night fall.

Thus we have discussed the dinner etiquette and other rules associated with dinner as furnished in our Purāṇa. It is clear that these conventional dinner rules might have been observed by refined people with a view to mentain their dignity in society.

*Dress and Ornaments*

Dress is an important aspect of social life. It generally reflects the standard of living of people. The different shapes of garments are the indication of the imagination of people. In ancient India people used garments of different shapes and of different fibres. The use of different kinds of garment can be marked in the Indus Valley civilization.[784] The Vedic Aryan[786] also used garments to cover their nakedness. The Purāṇa gives informations regarding the dress and garments of people. It refers to many words for clothes such as *ambara*,[786] *vasana*,[787] *vastra*,[788] *paridhāna*.[789] The people had knowledge of two garments. It is mentioned that a householder should wear two uniforms.[790] These two garments are lower and upper garments. Our Purāṇa is not very clear on shape of garments. The lower garment was called *śātya*.[791] It may be suggested that it might have been used for the lower garment of men and women both. Our Purāṇa does not mention the style of wearing the lower garment. We can have an idea of the style of wearing lower garment by women and male in the early sculptures. The Didarganj Yaksini,[792] many women of Sanchi[793] and Bharhut[794] sculptures have been represented as wearing lower garment. It is just like modern *sāḍī*. Men have been depicted as wearing *dhotī*. The *dhotī*, as usual, covers the loins and thighs, reaching below the knees, with the ends hanging down to the ground in front in a series of extremely stiff and formal folds.[795] But the common people have been depicted in the sculpture as wearing the lower garment upto knee.[796] The figure of Indra from Bodha Grya sculpture[797] wears the

lower garment wrapped round the lower part of body. Labourers have been represented as wearing the lower garment in different fashion in the Jetavana scence of Bodha Gaya sculpture.[798] A ploughman,[799] workers[800] and wrestlers[801] wore different types of lower garments as it is clear from the Gandhara sculpture of the Kuṣāṇa age.

Our Purāṇa also knows the use of the upper garment. A few words like *uttarīya*,[802] *chaila*,[803] mentioned in the Purāṇa, stand for the upper garment. No special word has been used in text to denote the upper garment of women. The style of wearing upper garment by men can be marked in the contemporary sculpture of Bharhut[804] and Sanchi.[805] The upper garment generally was like modern *chādara* for wrapping the upper parts of body.

*Coloured Garment* : The dyeing of clothes was very common. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to garments of yellow (*pīta*),[806] blue (*nīla*),[807] white (*ujjvala*),[808] red (*raktāmbara*),[809] and dust (*ruṣitāmbara*)[810] colours. The garments of various prints (*surūpāṇī vāsansī*)[811] have also been mentioned in our Purāṇa.

*Skin Garments* : Our Purāṇa also speaks of the use of the skin garments. It informs us that Dhruva beheld seven Munis sitting upon hides of the black antelope.[812] At another place we are informed by that Keśidhvaja, having clothed himself in the deer-skin, went to the forest, where Khāṇḍikya was residing.[813] The followers of the third *āśrama* of life have been advised to use the garment made of skin[814] and grass. The use of skin-garment can be corroborated by the evidence of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.[815] The contemporary sculptures[816] also depict the use of such garment.

*Bark Garment* : The garments of barks and leaves of trees have been mentioned in our Purāṇa.[817] The garment, made of grass, was for the follower of *Vānaprastha* stage.[818] The use of the garment of other fibres is also known to the Purāṇa. We are also informed that the garments will be mostly made of the fibres of the "*san*" in the Kali age.[819]

*Ornaments*

Ornaments also help us to know the standard of living of people. Jewellery is regarded as a traditional form of wealth, but it is also used for personal decoration, both by men and women. It, thus, serves to satisfy the aesthetic needs of the poor and the rich alike, the former by the simple ornaments of silver, copper, and brass and the latter by the dazzling and beautiful ornaments of precious stones and gold. Ornaments had something more than their decorative value. The tendency to put on too many ornaments was common among ladies; for men it was merely an attempt to show off.

Different kinds of ornaments were used by people since the Indus Valley civilization.[820] In the vedic age,[821] anklets, bracelets and earrings were worn by people. The Gṛhya Sūtra literature also refers to several kinds of ornaments.[822]

The study of our Purāṇa shows that people used many kinds of ornaments. The *valaya, i.e.*, bracelet was used by both men[823] and women.[824] We can have a tentative idea about the different shapes of bracelet in the contemporary sculptures.[825] Another important ornament, mentioned in the Purāṇa, is earring, and *karṇikā*,[826] *kuṇḍala*[827] *avataṁsaka*[828] are the words used for it. Śeṣa,[829] Nāginīs,[830] Balarāma[831] and Viṣṇu[832] have been depicted in the Purāṇa as wearing earrings. These instances clearly show that earrings were used by both men and women. *Kuṇḍala* or earrings were worn on the ear-lobe which was bored for that purpose. Different kinds of *kuṇḍala*, were also in existence in ancient times.[833]

*Avataṁsa* is another kind of ear-ornament, which is ear-flower or *karṇa phūla* in Hindī. The Purāṇa informs us that wild flowers were used as *avataṁsa* by Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.[834] Balarāma, at another place, is mentioned to have worn *avantansotpala*[835] which stands for the ear-flower of lotus design. The *karṇikā*[836] was another form of earring. Different designs of earrings can be marked in the sculptures[837] of Bharhut, Bodha Gaya and Sanchi. *Keyūra, i.e.*, armlet was a jewelled band worn on the upper arm by men and women. The Purāṇa is well acquainted with *keyūra*.[838] The early Buddhist sculp-

tures[839] depict the different designs and shapes of *keyūra*. Another ornament was *kaṭaka*[840] and it was adorend near the wrist. It was circular in shape. It may be taken as *karā* in Hindī. Very heavy *kaṭakas* have been depicted in the sculptures of Bharhut and Sanchi. The head-ornaments had got an important place in jewellery in ancient times. The *kirīṭa* has been referred to in the Purāṇa.[841] The *kirīṭa* was also worn by god[842], Kasṁa[843] and Nāgas.[844] It was a head gear of conical shape. It was used by both male and female. Another head ornament, mentioned in our Purāṇa, is *mukuṭa*.[845] These two head ornaments were generally used by kings. This fact can be corroborated by contemporary numismatic evidences. Many coins, assigning to the Kuṣāṇa age,[846] depict the figure of king with crown. *Mudrikā*,[847] *i.e.*, finger ring is also known to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Various designs of finger-ring have been depicted in the sculptures of Bharhut.[848] *Akṣamālā*,[849] a neck chain was another ornament. The depiction of neck-chain can also be marked in early Buddhist sculptures. *Mālā* also was an ornament in ancient India.[850] The Purāṇa is well acquainted with the garland of the lotus-flowers.[851] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have also been described as wearing flowers-garlands.[852] The Sanchi sculptures[853] also attest to the use of the garland of flowers. The use of necklace can be traced in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which refers to God Viṣṇu[854] as wearing *hāra, i.e.*, necklace. The wives of Nāga[855] are also stated to have worn the necklace. In the Bharhut sculpture[856] both male and female have been shown as wearing it. The Bodh Gaya[857] sculpture also depicts this ornament. Thus it is clear from the sculptures that different patterns of *hāra* were used by people. It appears to be a neckornament of more or less elaborate workmanship. It generally hangs six *aṅgulas* below the *hikka sūtra* about the middle of the chest.[858]

### *Hair Arrangements*

It has been customary with human beings in all ages to arrange their hair in one way or the other. All men and women were not arranging their hair alike. Different kinds of hair-styles were prevalent in ancient age. The practice of hair-dressing was in vogue

since the age of the Indus culture.[859] The vedic people[860] also kept their hair in different styles. The Gṛhya Sūtras[871] also know about the arrangement of hair. The Jātaka[862] and the epics[863] give some interesting information regarding hair-dressing.

Our Purāṇa acquaints us with different styles of hair-arrangement. It advises the householders to keep their hair clean and decorated with flowers and scent.[864] It further says that in the Kali age the pride of beauty will be promoted by hair.[865] This clearly indicates that in the Kali age women will have pride of beauty of their hair. We are further informed by the Purāṇa that in the Kali age gold, jewels, diamonds, clothes will all have perished and the hair will be only ornament with which women can decorate themselves.[866] All these references show that in the age of our Purāṇa women used to keep their hair well-decorated. Sometimes, women used to decorate their hair with flowers. It is clear from a story that Satyabhāmā, wife of Kṛṣṇa had great desire to decorate her hair with *Pārijāta* flower and so she wanted to bring the tree of that flower from Indra's garden.[867] The real picture of hair-arrangement can be noticed in the sculptures of Bharhut and Sanchi which show different methods of arranging the hair. In the first type, the loose hair is allowed to fall at the back and then the end is looped and knotted,[868] or it is arranged in a top knot when the lady has a head-dress.[869] In the third type, the falling hair down the back is divided into two halves and that, too, further into tassels, and then plated.[870] Men usually kept long hair tied in a top knot around which the folds of the turban were arranged.[871] It is also clear from the sculptures that the ladies used to keep hair coiled round the head in a top knot.[872] In some cases the hair is decorated with an ornament.[873] A terracotta figure of the Śuṅga age, now kept in Indian Institute Museum at Oxford,[874] is very noteworthy for its ornamental elaboration and coiffure arrangement. The sculptures of Mathura[875] and Gandhara[876] school also show the different styles of hair-arrangement. It is also clear from the kuṣāṇa art that people much cared for the hair arrangement[877].

Our Purāṇa says something more about other hair-styles. It refers to shaven headed *Digambara*.[878] The *Pāṣaṇḍas* have been des-

cribed as shaven headed.[879] We are further informed that king Sagara compelled the Yavanas to shave their head entirely. This shows that some people used to shave their head-hair. It can be supported by archaeological evidenees. Several men with shaven headed have been represented in the sculpture of early Christian era.[880] On some Indo-Greek coins[881] the Yavana kings have been represented with shaven headed.

Keeping of long hair and knot on top, another hair-style, was prevalent in the Indus Valley civilization[882] and in the vedic age.[883] Kauṭilya[884] also refers to braided hair under the guise of an ascetic. According to Manu[885] and Yajnavalkya,[886] *snātakas* are allowed to keep long hair.

Our Purāṇa also contains references to *pralamba keśa*, and *jaṭā*. We are told in a story that king Sagara compelled the Pāradas to keep long hair. The Purāṇa also refers to *jaṭā*, *i.e.* maitted hair. In the *vānaprasthāśrama*, the people used to keep long hair and braid and beard. Some *Pāṣaṇḍas*[887] have been referred to as having long *jaṭā*. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* also shows its acquaintance with *lamba kesa*.[888] The existence of the keeping long hair and *jāṭā* can be confirmed by the Bharhut sculptures where we mark that men generally kept long hair tied with top-knot around which the folds of the turban were arranged.[889] The ascetics, as usual, had long hair worn round the crown in a cane-like fashion, or simply let loose.[890] Curly long locks touching the neck were favourite with musicians, chariots and soldiers.[891] Some numismatic devices also support the keeping of the kind of hair-style. On the contemporary coins of Kṣaharāta, the kings have been shown with long hair upto their neck.[892] The figures of Śiva, represented on the coins of the Kuṣāṇa kings, reveal various methods of arranging the hair. In some cases, it has been arranged in top-knot,[893] while in some other cases the locks of hair fall on either side[894] of the face in curls, besides the usual knot on the top of the head in *jaṭā* style. On some coins there is a coil on the apex of the head.[895]

The use of keeping beard and moustache was prevalent in society since very early period[896]. It was continued in the age of our Purāṇa

also. The Purāṇa advises the *vānaprasthāśrama*[897] people to keep long hair, braid, and beard. Further we are informed that king Sagara compelled the Pahlavas to let their beards grow.[898] The contemporary sculptures[899] also attest to the existence of the keeping of beard in the society. In the early Buddhist sculptures[900] we find beard was common in the society.

*Personal Decoration and Toilet*

Unguent vases, collyrium, mirror, oil, comb were required for personal decoration and for the make-up of the face in ancient India.

*Gandha* or perfumes had played an important part for decorating the people since the vedic age.[901] Pāṇini[902] refers to several kinds of perfumes. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is also acquainted with perfumes as it refers to the fragrant of perfumes in the Patāla region.[903] We also get a reference to the pot of unguent in the Purāṇa.[904] We are told that Kubjā, a maid servant, was appointed by king Kaṁsa for rubbing the unguent on king's body.[905] Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa are also reported to have rubbed unguent on various parts of their bodies and faces. V.S. Agrawala opines that spikenard was an old Indian perfume produced in the regions of the upper Indus and in Indo-Scythia and forwarded through Ujjain to Bharukaccha and thence to Egppt.[906] The use of unguents can be supported by the contemporary early Buddhist sculptures which depict many bearers of unguent.[907]

*Añjana* was another important thing for toilet and it had an important position in cosmetic. It was prevalent in ancient Indian society since long time. The people of Indus Valley civilization used it with the help of collyrium-sticks.[908] The people were also acquainted with it in the vedc age.[909] The *Mahābhārta* refers to fair-complexioned Punjabi women painting their eyes with *añajana* from the Trikakuṭ Mountain.[910] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[911] also shows its acquaintance with *añjana*. The contemporary literary sources[912] corroborate the use of collyrium in the society. Aśvaghoṣa's works *Saundarānanda* and *Buddha Charita* mention its use in society.

Mirror was also another important item of toilet and cosmetic in ancient India. Pāṇini[913] has shown his acquaintance with mirror. Our Purāṇa has two words for mirror, the *ādarśa*[914] and *darpaṇa*.[915] It refers to a mirror attached to pillar.[916] The contemporary literature also contains reference to mirror. We are informed by the *Sāundarānanda*[917] that Sundarī puts the mirror into her lover's hand. It is also possible that sculptures drew his inspiration from this book and they depicted a bath scene in few sculptures kept in the Provincial Museum[918] at Lucknow and the Mathura Museum. Probably the same thing was done in this period as well.

The keeping of staff was also a kind of fashion. The Gṛhya Sūtra literature[920] refers to its use. Pāṇini refers to staff which was used in the initiation ceremony.[921] Our Purāṇa[922] also mentions its use and it advises a person to travel in the forest with a staff in his hand. This might have been used for protection of body from danger.

The boots were used by Indian since very ancient time.[923] Our Purāṇa[924] speaks of the use of shoes by householders. The prevalence of the use of shoes can be supported by the contemporary sculptures[925] where people, with shoes in their feet, have been represented. In a solitary figure of a soldier at Bharhut,[926] the shoes have been shown reaching upto the legs and fastened by a cord with two tassels.

*Chhatrī* was another useful thing for a person to protect himself from water and sun. It was used by the people in the vedic age and onwards.[927] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[928] also knows the use of umbrellas. A householder has been advised to use an umbrella for the protection from rain and sun rays.[929] The use of an umbrella can be corroborated by the sculptures of the early Buddhist period.[930]

The *chāmaras* were used for kings and nobility. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[931] refers to use of chāmara in the court of Rāmchandra. The ordinary people could not even think of it because it was a luxurious article for royal class. We can get an idea of *chāmara* from an image of *chaurī* bearer *yakṣī* from from Didarganj now in the Patna Museum.[932] In the early Buddhist sculptures[933] there are numerous scenes in which *chāmaras* have been shown.

*Pastime and Recreations*

There were many kinds of recreations in ancient India. The entertainment had sociological value. People actually took part in game for recreation and for refreshing their minds. Some people did not take part in it but enjoyed it by witnessing the game. Some people took part in wrestling, dicing, etc., but many witnessed and enjoyed themselves. All kinds of entertainment were not for all grades of people. There were also cheaper and costlier entertainments. The types and spheres of recreations varied, according to the sex and taste of the person, but there were some which were universally enjoyed.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[934] like *Aṣṭādhyāyī*,[935] uses the word *krīdā* which stands for sport. The study of the Purāṇa gives ample light on the different kinds of entertainment as prevalent in society at that time. The following are important kinds of entertainment as mentioned in our text : (*i*) wrestling, (*ii*) dice playing, (*iii*) hunting, (*iv*) story-telling, (*v*) sports for children, (*vi*) sporting in water, (*vii*) dancing, (*viii*) singing and (*ix*) playing on musical instruments.

Before discussing above mentioned sources of entertainment, it is essential to deal with *samājotsava*.[936] Our Purāṇa refers to this term but do not give its meaning. This term can be explained and analysed with the help of other literary sources. It should be mentioned that Panini refers to *samājya*[937] which Kātyāyana and Patañjali explain as a place where people flock together[938] or "festive gatherings." The Jātaka gives further clear information that the *samājjas* were special gatherings "where crowds of men, women and children gather together and witnessed various kinds of shows and performances, like dancing and music, combats of elephants, horses and rams, bouts at quarter staff and wrestling."[939] The Jātaka story mentions *samājya* gatherings of men and women and seats arranged in tiers upon tiers.[940] The terms *samāja* and *samājya* seem to be synonymous. Thus it was a gathering of people at certain place.

In ancient time, people used to gather at one place to witness the function. The *samājya* gatherings formed a regular feature of social life in the Mahājānapada period. We have already seen that the

Jātakas also refer to this gathering. Pāṇini also refers to assemblies under the general name of *samavāya,*[941] which according to the commentators included *samāja,*[942] distinguished from a human assemblage (*samāja*). It was also in use in the time of Aśoka, but he is said to have inter-directed the popular *samāja* as not promoting morals. The term *samāja* or *samājotsava* has been used in our Purāṇa in the same sense. We are informed in the Purāṇa that at the time of wrestling between Kṛṣṇa and the boxers appointed by Kaṁsa, many people of all grades came to witness the function. Many platforms were constructed for different grades of people. It may be suggested that at the time of any *samājotsava* people used to assemble for entertainment.

*Wrestling* : It was an important source of entertainment in ancient India[943] in different periods. It was also popular in the age of our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa gives a vivid and faithful description of wrestling[944] (*malla-yuddha*). We are informed about the wrestling between Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma on one hand and the boxers appointed by king Kaṁsa on the other. In this story we find the construction of many beautiful platforms for people from where they could witness the functions. Many platforms were constructed separately for all grades of people, another for the ladies of the place, and another for the wives of the citizens.[945] King is described to have seated on a high and lofty platform[946] The *Vidhura Paṇḍita Jātaka*[947] also confirms the arrangement of seats in tiers upon tiers.

Regarding another feature of wrestling, the Purāṇa informs that near the centre of circle, judges of the games were stationed by Kaṁsa.[948] The wrestling was without weapon.[949] Some time fair and unfair means were also used in it. It is clear from the Purāṇa that Kaṁsa directed his wrestlers to kill Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in wrestling either by fair or unfair means.[950] Our text further acquaints us with some technical terms used in the wrestling. The following are terms[951] used in wresting :

1. *sanipāta* — "mutual laying hold of."
2. *avadūta* — "letting go of the adversary."

3. *kṣepaṇa* — "pulling to, and casting back."
4. *muṣṭinipāta* — "striking with fists."
5. *kilanipāta* — "striking with the elbow."
6. *vajranipāta* — "striking with the fore-arm."
7. *janunirghāta* — "pressing or striking with knees."
8. *bāhuvighaṭṭna* — "interlocking the arms."
9. *padoddhūta* — "kicking."
10. *prsaṛṣṭa* — "intertwining of the whole body."
11. *aśmanirghāta* — "striking with stones or striking with blows as hard as stones."
12. *aśastrayuddham* — "one without weapon."

Thus it is clear that wrestling was very popular entertainment in that age. The *Lalitavistara*[952] also confirms the popularity of wrestling, in ancient period. The sculptures of Bharhut, too, depict the werstling scene[953] in which two wrestlers have been shown in doing wrestling. The depiction of wrestlers in the Gandhara[954] art of the Kuṣāṇa age also conforms the existence of wrestling in the society. It may be suggested that it was fit for all people but those, who had some knowledge of wrestling, could take part in it. Another point is to be noted down it was costly affair, and royal and kingly class used to make some arrangements for the performance of wrestling.

*Dice-playing* : Dice playing was an important indoor game in ancient India.[955] The Arthaśāstra also advocates the strict control of gambling which it could confine entirely to officially managed gambling houses.[956] The play of dice can be found in other ancient texts[957] and in our Purāṇa too. It was an important game in that age. The Purāṇa says that Ṛtuparṇa,[958] the friend of Nala, was skilled in dice. It further gives a graphic description of dice-play between Rukmin Balarāma.[959] It is clear from this story that the dice was sometimes played in an assembly. It was popular among kingly class. But the general people would have also played this game. In our text we are informed that Balarāma lost the game in the begining.[960] In this game sometimes battle, conflicts and hot discussion developed among the

parties. We know that in dice-game there ensued a combat between Balarama and Rukmin, and in the same battle the latter was killed. The parties used unfair means in this game. The sculpture of Bharhut represents a gambling scene in which *akṣas* are shown as little cubs.[961]

*Hunting* : In ancient India hunting was also a source of entertainment. In the vedic age it was very popular among nobles and kings.[962] The epics are also full of references to it. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* gives interesting references to hunting done by king Vikukṣi, son of Ikṣvāku, who went to a forest and killed many deers and wild animals for the celebration *śrāddha* ceremony.[963] King Mitrasaha also went to a forest for deer-hunting.[964] King Praskna is also said to have taken interest in hunting.[965] Hunting was generally done with the help of bow and arrow. The hunting, done by king, was considered as a praise-worthy but for a hunter it was highly condemned. Our Purana provides a hell for a hunter.[966] Here one can mark the disparity between higher and low class of people. The noble or aristocratic class could hunt for pleasure sake; but a hunter was not allowed to hunt even for his livelihood. So it may be suggested that there was a rift between haves and havenots. It is also to be noted down that though the doctrine of non-injury discouraged it, a tacit exception was made in the case of kings and nobles. The existence of the hunting can be corroborated by the contemporary Buddhist sculptures.[967]

*Sports for Childern* : Our Purāṇa also refers to some sports especially played by children. It mentions *hiraṇa krīḍanaṁ* a game for children. What is *hiraṇa krīḍana?* Wilson seems to be right when he remarks on the game, "Jumping with both feet at once, as deer bound, two boys together, the one that holds out longest, or comes to a given point first, is the victor, and the vanquished is then bound to carrying him to the goal, if not already attained, and back again to the starting post, on his shoulder. The *Bhāgavata* does not specify this game, but mentions that the vanquished carry the victors on their backs."[968] We are informed by the Purāṇa under review that this game was played by children. Kṛṣṇa Balarāma and other cow-herd boys used to play this game. The Purāṇa[969] says that boys commenced playing at

the game of leaping like deer, two and two together. Thus it is clear that this game was played among the group of children.

The Purāṇa also mentions other games which were played by children. We are informed that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa used to play with cows and calves.[970] So other boys would also have enjoyed such game. Some boys used to mimicked the cry of the peacock.[971] A few used to swing on the boughs of trees.[972] Some also took pleasure in hurling the stones.[973] We are also informd that children also used to play with toys.[974] Toy-playing appears to be another source of entertainment for children. The beautiful toys of the Śunga and Kuṣāṇa periods have come to light. These toy-terracottas further support the prevalence of toy in our age. Different kinds of exercise were also common in boys.[976]

*Water-sporting* : It is clear from the Purāṇa that kings like Sahasrārjuna[977] used to sport in the water. It seems to be very popular among kinds.

*Dancing* : It was popular among ancient Indian people since the Indus Valley civilization[978] and it also continued in later period[979] as well. It was also popular in the age of our Purāṇa. The *apsarās* are mentioned to have danced before Lakṣmī, and also in the palace of Hiraṇyakaśipu.[980] This shows that the *apsarās* were greatly associated with dance. Our Purāṇa refers to another kind of dance, *i.e.*, *rāsamaṇḍala*[181] which is danced by men and women, holding each others' hand, and going round in a circle, singing the airs to which they dance. According to Bharata, the airs are various both in melody and time, and the number of persons should not exceed sixty-four.[983] Saṅkara, the commentator of the *Harṣacharita* explains, that *rāsa* is a dance performed in a circle by eight, sixteen or 32 persons. Thus *rāsamaṇḍala* was played by the combination of men and women. The Purāṇa under consideratien gives a vivid description of *rāsamaṇḍala*[984] played by Kṛṣṇa and *gopīs*.

The Purāṇa contains references to other type of dance such as *bhrānti*, *rechaka* and *daṇḍapāta*. Kṛṣṇa is stated to have danced in these poses on the head of serpent Kālīya.[985] These terms stand for

the different disposition of the feet in dancing. The *daṇḍapāta* has been taken as the falling of feet like that of a club.[986]

We find many dancing scenes in the sculptures of Bharhut which represent only ladies dancing. Five dancing scenes representing, probably, different forms are noticed.[987] These include a wife wanting to please her husband, the accomplished nymphs and courtesans dancing to the accompaniment of vocal and instrumental music, a Nāga maiden dancing on the lifted hood of a Nāgarāja maintaining rhythm with motions of his body, and lastly, dancing by a Nāgarāja. A dancing couple of kinnaras has been represented in Bharhut medallion of a rail pillar.[988] In Prasenjit railing pillar of Bharhut, the four dancers and the movement of their bodies have been depicted. The dancing scene of Devadharmā Sabhā of Ajātaśatru's pillar from Bharhut is very interesting. In this scence a few women are shown dancing in different poses and a few males are playing on musical instrument.[989] Some dancing girls are represented on a railing pillar from Mathura.[990]

*Music in general* : In the vedic age,[991] music had advanced to a great extent and some musical instruments were also used. In the age of Jātakas[992] also music was loved by people. We find in the Jātakas that there the art of music called by *Gandharvaveda*, was one of the 18 *śilpas* or subjects of study.[993]

The vocal music and singing also continued to be popular in the age of our Purāṇa. It is clear from the text that *gopīs* and even Kṛṣṇa[994] used to sing songs. It shows that men and women both used to sing song. There is also reference to *gandharvas* who sang before Lakṣmi[995] and also enchanted Brahmā and Raivata[996] with very interesting song. Certain gestures and postures in the Bharhut sculpture[997] suggest the practice of vocal music.

*Musical Instruments* : Playing on musical instrument was also a source of entertainment through all ages in Indian history. People of all classes were interested in it. A few sections of people were highly trained in playing on the musical instruments. It was not possible for every body to play on all kinds of musical instruments.

Playing on instrumental music for pleasure was common in the age of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and it has mentioned certain musical instruments. The *bherī*, a musical instrument of ancient period,[998] is mentioned in the Purāṇa. E.W. Hopkins,[999] who has made some study of the ancient musical instruments, seems to think that *bherī* may not be cymbal. Dikshitar[1000] takes it as a special sort of drum. It is evident from the epic literature[1001] that the *bherī* was sounded by beating. *Dundubhi*, a kind of cattle drum,[1002] is another musical instrument[1003] which was played in war and peace times. Another instrument is *gomukha*.[1004] It is a "wind instrument" which resembles somewhat to the mouth of the cow.[1005] A long curved pipe, with cow faced at the end has been dipicted in the sculpture of Sanchi Toraṇa.[1006] We mark that a blower is holding a long pipe with both hands and he is blowing at one end. So it is a kind of long curved pipe with cow faced at the end. *Kāhala* was played in peace and war time.[1007] It was a kind of drum, most probably a kind of *dholak* in Hindī. It has been represented in the sculptures of Bharhut[1008] and of Sanchi.[1009] It is generally beaten with fingers. *Vīṇā*, a well known musical instrument of ancient India,[1010] is also found mentioned in the Purāṇa.[1011] It is a kind of lyrist. The Purāṇa does not give any hint to the different parts of *vīṇā* But the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*[1012] enumerates the parts of *vina* as head or neck (*śiras*), cavity (*udara*), sounding board (*ambhaṇa*), strings (*tantra*) and plectrum (*vādana*). A harp of seven strings is beings played in the bas-relief of the Indrasālaguhā, and the Andabhuta Jātaka scenes,[1013] and a drum, two harps and a pair of cymbals can be seen in the famous dancing *apsarās* scene.[1014] While a stringed *vīṇā* in the hand of Pañchaśikhā, the famous harper of Indra, is most conspicuous in another relief.[1015] The sculptures of Sanchi[1016] and Pavaya[1017] also contain the representation of *vīṇā* with many strings. It is clear from these representations that women and men both used to play on *vīṇā*. It was played either with finger or with the help of plectrum. Another musical iustrument is *śaṅkha*,[1018] *i.e.*, conch shell. The different shapes of conch shells have been represented in the sculptures of Sanchi *torana*.[1019] The *śaṅkha* is perforated at one end. It was a kind of wind-instrument. *Veṇu* or flute, appears to be

a popular musical instrment in the age of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.*[1020] The sculpturse of Sanchi[1021] and Pawaya[1022] also contain the representations of flute. The Purāṇa[1023] mentions *paṭaha* another musical instrument. The word *paṭaha* means a drum which is beaten keeping upward.[1024] It may be taken as modern *tabalā* in Hindi. The sculpture at Pawaya[1025] depicts this instrument clearly. *Ānaka dundubhi*[1026] is another musical instrument. It stands for a big drum.[1027] It is generally beaten at one end with a stick. The Sanchi sculptures[1028] contain the representation of the different sizes of the big drum. It has also been shown as being beaten at one end. *Mṛdaṅga,*[1029] an another instrument is a kind of drum. It is also used in modern age. It is a big drum wide in the middle and narrow at the end. It is shaped like a barrel whose left head is a little smaller than the right head one, over each of which a goat skin is fixed. *Tūrya*[1030] was used in war and even peace time and it was used by divine persons also. It was also an important musical instrument of ancient India.[1031] It is a long wind instrument or a sort of tabor, *i.e., turahī* in Hindi. It has been clearly represented in the sculpture of Sanchi *taraṇa.*[1032]

### *Household Effects*

These included several utensils used in cooking, as well as other articles needed for ordinary household comforts. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* mentions *sthālī*[1033] (modern *thālī*), *kalaśa*[1034] (jar), *kumbha,*[1035] *bhāṇḍa*[1036] (larger vessel), *ghaṭa,*[1037] (vessel). The *sūrpa*[1038] might have been used for winning purpose. *Kamaṇḍala*[1039] was another pot which was used by *ṛṣi.* We have also a reference to golden dish (*hiraṇya pātra*).[1040] The *ukhala*[1041] and *musala*[1042] were also used in the age of our Purāṇa. They might have been used in the society of that time. We find also references to furnitures in the Purāṇa. The progress of civilization brought with it certain amenities, such as furniture to make life easy and homes comfortable. Furniture was of two main classes, *viz., śayana,* for lying down and *āsana,* for sitting purpose. As examples of household furniture the Purāṇa mentions bed of wood (*dārumayī* śayyā),[1043] sayan prastara[1044] (bed). The *āsandi,* also mentioned in vedic literature,[1045] is another furniture. The *āsandi* had two fore feet, two

back feet, two length-wise and two cross-wise. The cushion and the pillow were also attached to it.[1046] It is clear from the Purāṇa that it was an essential furniture in the house of a *gṛhastha* and it was presented to *atithi*.[1047] Another furniture was *bālaparyaṅka*[1048] (*i.e.*, small cot or *khatolā* in Hindī). The Purāṇa refers to *parna sayya*[1049] (the bed of leaves). Though Balarama and Kṛṣṇa used it, ordinary people might have also used it. The *simhasana*[1050] (lion throne) was a royal seat. *Chhatra*[1051] (umbrella) and *chāmara*[1052] were also used in the domestic life. The contemporary sculpture also depict the above-mentioned furniture. The early Buddhist sculptures depict bed,[1053] chairs,[1054] umbrella,[1055] *chāmara*,[1056] etc. The different kinds of high backed chairs,[1057] umbrellas,[1058] *siṁhāsana*[1059] and *chāmaras*[1060] can be seen on the coins of early Gupta rulers.

*Social Evils and Miscellaneous Items of Social Interest*

The Purāṇa mentions some social evils which are to be noted here. The begging a social evil. Students,[1061] hermits,[1062] etc., used to depend on begging in society. There were other social parasites like drinking of wine,[1063] abortion,[1064] sale of women,[1065] prostitution, killing of women, boys and cows.[1066] Those evils were current in the then society. The Purāṇa has highly condemned these evils.

There are eertain other items of social interest which refer to social etiquette conventions, customs, manners and habits.[1067]

*Purity of Speech* : Our Purāṇa, laying emphasis on the purity of speech, says that a wise man ever speak the truth when it is agreeable, and when the truth would inflict pain let him hold in peace.[1068] A householder is not to utter that which, though acceptable, would be detrimental; for it were better to speak that which would be salutary.[1069] A householder is not allowed to speak untruth.[1070]

*Respect for Elders* : The householder has been advised to salute respectfully his teacher, elder, sage and to worship god.[1071] In practice we find that youngers used to touch the feet of their elders. Prahlāda touched his father's feet.[1072] Akrura bowed his head down to the feet of Hari.[1073] Students also touched the feet of their teacher.

The respected persons were indicated as *dharmajña,*[1074] *mahābhāga,*[1075] *etc.*

*Customs and Superstitions* : There were some peculiar customs prevalent in that age. It is clear from a story that father used to smell the head of his son.[1076] The prevalence of this custom can be supported by the evidence of the *Rāmāyaṇa.*[1077] Some superstitions might have been prevalent at that time as it is clear from the Purāṇa that when baby Kṛṣṇa killed Pūtanā, then Yaśodā waved over him a cow-tail brush to guard him from harm and placed dried cow-dung on his head.[1078]

*Habits of Cleanliness* : If cleanliness is next to godliness, the ancient Āryans of the period excelled in this divine virtue. Cleanliness through *āchamana* or sipping of water and washing of hands, *etc.*, is everywhere insisted upon in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.*[1079] Perhaps for the keeping the body clean, every man has been advised to take bath daily.[1080] He is to take bath wearing a garment but not naked. In naked bath, as we may presume, there is very chance of not washing the clothes. So the idea behind it seems to be that clothes should be daily washed into water. Here also lies the idea of cleanliness. The rules of purity and cleanliness were also observed at the time of taking meals which we have already discussed.[1081] Householder has been also advised to keep his hair clean.[1082]

*Health and Diseases*

In the vedic literature there are references to a number of important diseases and many useful herbs which were employed to fight diseases. The physician's skill is constantly referred to and miraculous cures are described to the Aśvins—the great healers of diseases and experts in the surgical art.[1083] The *Ṛgveda*[1084] speaks of a leech wanting to cure a fracture. It also devotes some passages to the praise of *oṣadhis* or plants with an emphasis on their creative powers.[1085] The later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas also mention numerous diseases and their cure.[1086] The Gṛhya Sūtras also refer to the diseases, their prevention and cure.[1087] Pāṇini too speaks of the general health and the different kinds of diseases.[1088]

Our Purāṇa mentions a few diseases. *Jvara*[1089] has been used for fever in general, perhaps for all kinds of fever. *Akṣiroga*[1090] (ophthalmia) stands for all kinds of eye diseases. *Atīsāra*[1091] stands for dysentry. *Yakṣmā*[1092] was known to people even in that age. Our Purāṇa refers that Vichitravīrya became a patient of this disease. It is called T.B. It has been mentioned in the vedic literature[1093] also. *Pratiśyāya*[1094] is another disease which means catarrh. *Śūla*[1095] is cholic or even an acute pain. *Bhagandara*[1096] stands for fistula. *Ārśa*[1097] is called hemorrhoids. It is mentioned in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.[1098] Agrawala[1099] takes it as piles. *Uśrāvasa*[1100] stands for intumescence. *Chhadri*[1101] is another disease which means vomit[1102] and all diseases related to it. *Kuṣṭha*[1103] is called leprosy. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is acquainted with this disease. According to Charaka, *sidhmā*, *pamā* and *vicharchika* are reckoned amongst eighteen of *kuṣṭha*.[1104] *Gulma*[1105] is another disease and it stands for a chronic enlargement of the spleen or any glandular enlargement in the abdomen.[1106] *Sotha*[1107] is a swelling, tumour, morbid intumescene, dropsy. *Pliha*[1108] is spleen and it stands for the enlargement of spleen.

Thus we have seen that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* represents the picture of a developed society. The Purāṇa is acquainted with several aspects of the social life.

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13. *Ibid.*, *Vana.* 115.
14. *Ibid.*, Śalya. 40.
15. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1.10.ff.
16. *Ibid.*, I. 7.4-5; 26-27.
17. *Ibid.*, I.11.31; 43-49.
18. *Mbh.* 340.69-70.
19. *Viṣ. P.* I. Ch. 22; III. Chs. 1,2.
20. *Vā.* 61.80-90.
21. *Viṣ. P.* V. 1.2.

22. *Ibid.*, I. 15.11.
23. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.69, 89-90.
24. *Vā.* 61.80-90.
25. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 10-1-32.
26. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.26.
27. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.37.
28. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.93.
29. *Ibid.*, IV. 7.3-5.
30. *Vā.* 61.80-87.
31. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8-22.
32. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.1-4.
33. *Ved. Ind.* II. p. 86; Kane, *HDS.* Vol. II, p. 38; *Manu*, IV. 147; *Yāj*, I. 198.
34. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.23.
35. *Ibid.*, III. 4.6-9; Wilson, *Viṣ. P.* (tr.) 1961, p. 222.
36. *Ved. Ind.*, II. p. 95; *HDS*, Vol. II, pp. 180.ff.
37. *Digh Nik.* I. 80, 120; *Ang. Nik.* III. 223.
38. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.6.
39. *Mālavikā.* I. 17.
40. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.7.
41. *HDS.* II, p. 109.
42. *Rāmā BK.* 59.13-14.
43. *Vis. P.* I. 1.14; I. 13.51-52; II. 1.28, 33; IV. 4.16, 45-46, 88, etc.
44. *Ibid.*, III. 8.22-23.
45. *Ibid.*, III. 14.23.
46. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 244.
47. *Vis. P.* III. 18.25-27.
48. *Ibid.*, III. 18.28.
49. *Ibid.*, III. 18.25.
50. *Ibid.*, III. 18.30.
51. *Ibid.*, III. 18.24.
52. *ṚV.* I. 126. 1-5; VI. 47.22-25; Kane, *HDS*, II. pt. I. pp. 837.ff.
53. *Jāt.* II. 18; Mehta, *PBI.* p. 248; *Mbh. Van.* 33.78-79; *Rāmā.* I. 14.45, 47.
54. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.22-24, 34.
55. *Viṣ. P.* III. 7.29.
56. *Ibid.*, III. 14.22.ff; Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 260.
57. *Viś. P.* IV. 13.122.
58. *Ibid.*, III. 14.23; VI. 8.53.
59. *Mat.* 82. 3-10; 83. 12-26.
60. *Viṣ. P.* II. ch. 6
61. *Mat.* 277.17; *Var*, 109.5; 110.5.
62. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 13.122; IV. 1.33.
63. *Mat.* 274. 11-13.
64. *Ibid.*, 92.27-31.
65. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.22-24.
66. *Ibid.*, III. 8.34.
67. *Sel. Ins.* p. 160; *IA.* XII. pp. 139.4.
68. *Ep. Ind.* VIII., p. 58.
69. Puri, *IUK.* p. 89.
70. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.43.
71. *Ibid.*, III. 10.6-7.
72. *Ibid.*, III. 18.90; IV. 1.33.
73. *Mat.* 274. 19-23.
74. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.43-44.
75. *Kūr.* II. 26.64.
76. *Manu.* VII. 85; *Gaut.* V. 18.
77. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.39.
78. *Gaut.* VII. 6.
79. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.5-6.
80. *Ibid.*, IV. 8.7.ff.
81. Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 7.ff.
82. *Viṣ. P.* I. 17.50.
83. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.16.
84. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.9-29.
85. *Ibid.*, IV. 24.33.ff.
86. *Ibid.*, IV. 24.38-42.
87. *Viṣ. P.* I. 13.15-25.
88. *Ibid.*, I. 13.42-46, 47.
88. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.19; III. 12.1.
90. *Ibid.*, III. 8.16.
91. *Var.* 208.19-20.
92. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.97.
93. *Var.* 125.169; 37.34; *Brahmavai.* I. 1.141.
94. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.16, 25-26.

95. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.80-82.
96. *Ibid.*, I. 9.12-17, 18.f.
97. *Gaut.* 21.1; *Manu*, XI. 54; *Yāj*, III. 227; *Tait. Saṁ.* II. 5.1.1; *Śat. Br.* XII. 3.1.
98. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.9; V. 38.37.
99. *Ibid.*, II. 6.9.
100. *Ibid.*, II. 6.14.
101. *Ibid.*, III. 13.9.
102. *Gaut.* 14.1-4; *Manu.* V. 83; *Yāj.* III. 32.
103. *Viṣ. P.* I. 12.63; IV. 2.4; IV. 4.74; IV. 7.18.
104. Kālidāsa : *Raghu.* Comm. 2.53.
105. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.10; III. 8.39.
106. *Ibid.*, III. 8.29.
107. *Ibid.*, III. 8.26-29.
108. See, *infra*, Ch. IV.
109. *Infra.* Ch. IV.
110. *Vis. P.* IV. 10.19
111. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.40.ff.
112. *Arth.* I.2; *Manu.* I.89.
113. *Manu.* X. 82, 83, 85.
114. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.39.
115. *Ibid.*, I. Chs. 11, 12.
116. *Ibid.*, II. 1.9.
117. *Ibid.*, II. 1.34.
118. *Ibid.*, VI. 6.7
119. *Ibid.*, VI. 6.9.ff.
120. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.108-109.
121. *Ibid.*, II. 1.23-24.
122. *Vis. P.* II. 1.29.
123. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.36-37.
124. *Ibid.*, IV. 8.6, 9-10.
125. *Ibid.*, IV. 21.3-4.
126. *Ibid.*, I. 2.9.
127. *Ved. Ind.* I, pp. 205-207; Kane, *HDS*, II. p. 106.
128. Fick, *op. cit.*, p. 92, cf. Mehta, *PBI.* p. 254.
129. *Arth.* (tr.) pp.10-11.
130. *infra*, marriage section.
131. *infra*, *niyoga*.
132. *Viṣ. P.* I.13.13-29.
133. *Ibid.*, IV. 5.7.ff.
134. *Ibid.*, IV. 7.36.
135. *Vis. P.* III. 8.30.
136. *Arth.* I. 1; *Manu.* I. 90.
137. *Vis. P.* VI. 1.36.
138. *Ibid.*, V. 10. 28-29.
139. *VGA.* p. 317.
140. *Ibid.*
141. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.63.
142. Altekar, *VGA.* p. 317.
143. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.9.
144. *Ibid.*, III. 8.31.
145. *Arth.* I. 1.
146. *Manu.* I. 89.
147. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.10.
148. *Ibid.*, III. 3.19.
149. *Vis. P.* I. 15.120.
150. *Ibid.*, II. 8.29.
151. *Ibid.*, II. 6.25.
152. *Ibid.*, II. 12.27.
153. *Ibid.*, II. 24.62.
154. *Ibid.*, V. 19.14.
155. Sharma, *SAI*, pp. 88.ff.
156. *Gaut.* X. 60.
157. Sharma, *Op. cit.*, p. 88.
158. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1.36.
159. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.53.
160. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1.37; III. Ch. 18.
161. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.37.
162. Comp. *HI*, Vol. II, pp. 355.ff.
163. *Vā.* 58. 59.
164. *Brahmāṇda*, II. 31.59-60.
165. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.32.
166. *Arth.* I. 2.
167. *Āp. Dh. S.* I. 1.1-7; *Vas. Dh. S.* II. 20; *Gaut. Dh. S.*X, 54-57; *Mbh. Śānti.* 60. 28; *Vana.* 150.36.
168. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 2.23.
169. *Ibid.*, I. 6.35.
170. *Ibid.*, VI. 2.23.

171. *Ibid.*, III. 8.32.
172. *Ibid.*
173. *Gaut.* X. 60.
174. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.20.
175. *Ibid.*, IV. 24.69.
176. *Ibid.*, III. 8.34.
177. *Ibid.*
178. *Ibid.*, III. 8.34; IV. 2.23.
179. *Manu*, X. 127.
180. *Gaut.* 14.1-4; *Vas. Dh: S.* IV. 27.30: *Manu.* V. 83; *Yāj.* III. 22.
181. *Viṣ. P.* III. 13.19.
182. *Ibid.*, III. 8.32; VI. 2.35.
183. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.39.
184. *Ibid.*, III. 15.7.
185. *Ibid.*, III. 8.35.
186. *Ibid.*, III. 15.8; cf. *Vas.Dh.S.* I. 24; *Baudh. Dh. S.* I. 8.16.1-4.
187. *Gaut.* IV. 27.
188. Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 118.ff.
189. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 2.24.
190. *Ibid.*, III. 15.8.ff; III. 11.72.ff. cf. Kane, *HDS*, Vol. II, pp. 757.ff.
191. *Ved. Ind.* I. pp. 68.ff.
192. *Ait. Br.* 33.11; Kane, *op. cit.* II. pp. 418.f.
193. *Ch. Up.* II. 23.1
194. Kane, *op. cit.* p. 420.
195. Fick, *SONEI*, pp. 193.ff.
196. *Arth.* (tr.) p. 7; (text) I. 3.
197. *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 9.21.1; Gaut. III. 2.
198. *Viṣ.* P. III. 9.1.ff; III. 18.36.
199. *Ibid.*, III. 18.36.
200. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.1
201. *Ibid.*, V. 21.18-19.
202. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.36-37.
203. *Ibid.*, I. 17.10-11.
204. *Jāt.* II. p. 277; III. p. 122; IV. p. 237; *Pat.* on IV. 2.62.
205. Mookherjee, R.K., *AIE.* Fig. facing, p. 68.
206. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.1.
207. *Ibid.*, III. 9.2.ff.
208. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.2.
209. *Ibid.*, III. 9.4.
210. *Ibid.*, III. 9.6.
211. *Manu*, II. 194, 198, 200, 201; *Gaut.* II. 2; *Yāj.* I. 26.27.
212. *Mbh. Ādi.* 91; *Śānti*, 108, 18.
213. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.5.
214. *Manu.* II. 184-185; *Yāj*, II. 27; *Pat.* on I. 1.55.
214a. Mookherjee, R.K. *op. cit.* P. XXX.
215. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.6
216. *Manu.* III. 156, cf. *Yāj.* I. 220; *Mbh. Sānti.* 260.
217. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.7.
218. *Viṣ. P.* V. 21.20.
219. *Manu.* II. 245; *Yāj.* I. 51.
220. *Mbh. Adi.* 141-44.
221. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.7.
222. *San. Gr.* III. 1.ff. *Āśv. Gr. S. III.* 8.9.ff.
223. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.8.
224. *Ibid.*, II. 9.11.
225. *Ibid.*
226. *Mbh. Śānti.* 11.2.
227. *Manu.* VI. 90.
228. *Ibid.*, VI. 89.
229. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.9-10.
230. *Manu*, III. 70.
231. *Ibid.*, III. 91.
232. *Tait. Br.* 2.10.
233. *Ibid.*
234. *Ibid.*
235. *Manu.* III. 92.
236. *Yāj.* I. 103.
237. Cf. *ṚV.* I. 73.1; for detail, Kane, *HDS*, Vol. 2, pp. 749f; *Tait. Saṁ.* V. 22. 4; VI. 2.1.2; *Ait. Br.* 25.5; *Śat. BR.* II. 1.4.2.
238. Apte, *SRGS*, pp. 81.ff.
239. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.56.ff.

240. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.59.
241. *Gaut.* V. 36; *Manu.* III. 102-203; *Yāj.* I. 107 and 111.
242. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.56.
243. *Mārk.* 29.24-25; *Baudh. Gr. S.* II. 9.1-3: *Bhār. Gr. S.* III. 14; *Manu.* III. 94.
244. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.55.ff.
245. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.61.
246. *Ibid.*, III. 11.59.
247. *Ibid.*, III. 11.65.
248. *Ibid.*, III. 11.66; cf. *Viṣ. Dh. S.* 67.32; *Mbh. Śāntio* 191.12; *Mārk.* 29.31.
249. *Vā.* 71.24.
250. *Mbh. Śānti.* 191.12; *Vana,* 200. 22-25; Anu. 7.6; Manu. III. 100; *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 3.6.6; *San. Gr. S.* II. 17.1.
251. *Bṛhat Parāśara* (Jivananda pt. II, p. 90).
252. *Viṣ.* P. III. 11.68.
253. *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 3.7.3; *Viṣ. Dh. S.* 67.39; *Gaut.* V. 23.
254. *Śat. Br.* II. 1.4.2 (*SBE*, Vol. 12, p. 291).
255. *Manu.* III. 285.
256. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.57.
257. *Ibid.*, III. 11.58.
258. *Vas. Dh. S.* XI. 15; *Yāj.* I. 113.
259. *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 4.9.2-4.
260. *Śākun.* Act. IV.
261. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.5-7.
262. *Ibid.*, III. 11.8-20.
263. *Ibid.*, III. 11.21-28.
264. *Ibid.*, III. 11.97-102.
265. *Ibid.*, III. 11.26-55.
266. *Ibid.*, III. 11.55.ff.
267. *Ibid.*, III. 11.72.ff.
268. *Ibid.*, III. 11.97.
269. *Ibid.*, III. 11.101-102.
270. *Ibid.*, III. 11.109.ff.
271. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.18.ff.
272. *Arth.* I. 2; *Gaut.* III. 25-34. *Manu,* VI. 1.ff; *Yāj.* III. 45-55; *Mbh. Śānti.* 245. 1-14; *Anu.* Ch. 142.
273. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.18.
274. *Ibid.*, IV. 10.30.
275. *Ibid.*, II. 1.30.
276. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.129-130.
277. *Ibid.*, III. 9.18.
278. *Ibid.* IV. 2.129-130.
279. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.19.
280. *Manu.* VI. 14.
281. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.20. cf. *Manu.* VI. 6; *Gaut.* III. 34.
282. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.19. cf. *Manu.* VI. 6; *Gaut.* III. 34.
283. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.19. cf. *Arth.* I. 2; *Manu.* VI. 22, 26; *Yāj.* III. 51.
284. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.20.
285. *Ibid.*, III. 9.22.
286. *Ibid.*, III. 9.21.
287. *Manu.* VI. 5-7.
288. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.23.
289. *Ibid.*, I. 6.37.
290. *Ibid.*, III. 9.24.
291. *Ibid.*, III. 9.
292. *Ibid.*, III. 9.25.
293. *Manu.* VI. 41, 43-44; *Vas. Dh. S.* X. 12.15.
294. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.31.
295. *Ibid.*, III. 9.28.
296. *Ibid.*, III. 9.26.
297. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.27
298. *Ibid.* III. 9.29.
299. *Manu.* VI. 56; *Yaj.* III. 59; *Vas.* X. 8.
300. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.30.
301. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.33.
302. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.10.49.
303. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.32.
304. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.36.
305. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.37.

306. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1.33.ff.
307. *Ibid.*, III. 18.24-30.
308. *Ibid.*, IV. 24.51-53, 55.
309. *Ibid.*, V. 38.28.
310. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.18
311. *Ibid.*, IV. 24.18-25.
312. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 205.
313. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.9-11.
314. *Viṣ. P.* I. 6.32.38.
315. *Ibid.*, III. 9.17, 23, 33.
316. *Ibid.*, III. 7.20.
317. *Ibid.*, I. Ch. 13.
318. *Ibid.*, III. Chs. 17-18.
319. *Ibid.*, VI. Ch. 1.
320. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.26.
321. Kane, *op. cit.*, II. pt. I. pp. 165.ff.
322. Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-127; 130-133.
323. *Jāt.* VI. 235.ff; VI. 216-217.
324. *SAI.* pp. 126-127.
325. *Rāmā.* VII. 59.20-21; cf. *JOI.* Vol. III (Dec. 1953), p. 128.
326. *Viṣ. P.* III. 16.12.
327. *Jāt.* IV. 276, 390-391; cf. *SAI.* p. 126.
328. *Viṣ. P.* III. 16.12.
329. *Rāmā.* VII. 59.20-21; I. 58.10-11; *Manu.* X. 12; *Yāj.* I. 97; *Gaut.* IV. 15-16.
330. *Jāt.* IV. 388.
331. *Ibid.*, V. 429.
332. *Ibid.*, V. 449.
333. *Manu.* X. 55.
334. *Ibid.*, X. 56.
335. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 3.22-24.
336. *Ibid.*, III. 15.7.
337. Worterbuch, *Sans. dic.* Vol. 6, p. 1342.
338. *Viṣ. P.* I. 13.33.ff.
339. q. Kane, *HDS*, II. pt. I. p. 86.
340. *Baudh. Dh. S.* I. 9.3; II. 2.23; *Manu.* X. 8; *Yāj.* I. 91.
341. *Jāt.* IV. 413.
342. *Ibid.*, II. 36; V. 337
343. *Manu.* X. 48.
344. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 3.22.
345. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.23-24.
346. *Manu.* IX. 235-239
347. *Ibid.*
348. *Viṣ. P.* III. 18.50
349. *Ibid.*, III. 18.96.
350. *Ibid.*, III. 18.98.
351. *Ibid.*, III. 18.50.
352. *Ibid.*, III. 18.52.ff.
353. *Viṣ. P.* III. 18.43.ff.
354. *Ibid.*, III. 18.40-41.
355. *Aparārka*, p. 923.
356. *Sm. Ch.* pt. I. p. 118.
357. *Viṣ. P.* III. 16.12.
358. *Ibid.*, III. 13.13-21.
359. *Ibid.*, III. 13.19.
360. *Ibid.*, III. 13.18.
361. *Viṣ. P.* III. 16.12-13.
362. *Ibid.*
363. *Ibid.*, III. 15.8.
364. *Ibid.*, III. 15.5.
365. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 389.ff.
366. *Mbh. Śānti.* Ch. 65.
367. *Vis. P.* IV. 3.42.ff.
368. *Ibid.*, V. 23.4.
369. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.49.
370. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.45.
371. Whitehead, *PMC.* I. pl. VI. 512.
372. *Ibid.*, pl. II. 35; pl. VI. 1.
373. *JRAS*, 1909, p. 1053; *ASI*-AR, 1914, 1915, pp. 77-78; cf. *Sel. Ins.* p. 90.
374. *Sel. Ins.* No. 59, pp. 160.ff.
375. *Ibid.*, No. 58, pp, 157.f.
376. Puri, *IUK* (1965), p. 88.
377. Pandey, *HS*, pp. 2.ff.
378. Kane, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 195.ff.
379. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.112.
380. *Manu.* III. 2; *Yāj.* I. 79.

381. *Baudh. Dh. S.* I. 7. 45; *Āp. Dh. S.* II.1.
382. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.112.
383. *Ibid.*, III. 11.116.
384. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
385. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.119-122.
386. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.113-115.
387. *Ibid.*, III. 11.123-124.
388. For detail *HS.* pp. 90.f.
389. *Infra, Niyoga.*
390. *Viṣ. P.* III. 13.6.
391. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 106.ff; Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 222.ff.
392. *Āśv. Gṛ. S.* q. in *VMS.* I. p. 172.
393. *Baudh Gṛ. S.* I. 10.7.
394. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.4; III. 13.1. etc.
395. *Ibid.*, III 10.4.
396. *Ibid.*, III. 13.1.
397. *Āsv. Gṛ. S.* I. 14.1-9; *Āp. Gṛ. S.* 14.1-8; *Ghob. Gṛ. S.* II. 7.1-12.
398. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.8.ff.
399. *Ibid.*, III. 10.8.
400. The *Śat. Br.* (VI. 1.3.9) holds that the child should be named on the day of the birth. Several Gṛhya Sūtras (*S. Gr. S.* I. 24.4; *Āśv. Gṛ. S.* I. 15.4) prescribe for it the tenth or twelfth day after the birth of the child. *Laghu Āśvalāyana* (VI. 1) allows it on 10th, 12th or 16th days; for detail Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 238.ff.
401. Apastamba, Baudh., Bhār., and Pār. prescribe the 10th day after birth for *nāmakarana*. The *Mahābhāsya* (I, p. 4) also supports the same fact. The *Kādambari* (*Pūrva.* 68) says that Tārāpiḍa named his son Chandrapīda on the tenth day after birth.
402. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.8.
403. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 245.
404. *Mahā.* II. p. 296; I. pp. 41, 359; II. p. 425.
405. The *Pār. Gṛ. S.* (I.117), *Baudh. Gṛ. S.* (I.11.10) hold the similar view like our Purāṇa. The Mahābhāṣya (III. p. 416) cites Indravarmana and Indrapālita as the names of *rājanya.* Yama (q. *Aparārka*, p. 27) opines that the names of brāhmaṇas should have the eddition of *śarmā* or *deva*, of ksatriya *varmā* or *trātā*, of vaiśya *bhūti* or datta, and of śūdra *dāsa.*
406. *Ep. Ind.* VIII. p. 43.
407. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
408. *CII.* III, p. 156.
409. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.10-11.
410. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.23.
411. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.35-37.
412. *Ibid.*, IV. 4. 70-72.
413. *Viṣ. P.* V. 38.79.
414. *Baudh. Gṛ. S.* II.4; *Pār. Gr. S.* II.1; *Āśv. Gr. S.* I.17.1-18.
415. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 163.f; Kane, *op.cit.*, p. 261.
416. *HS.* p. 165.
417. *Ibid.*, pp. 161.ff.
418. *Chikitsāsthana* Ch. 24.72.
419. *Aśv. Gṛ.S.* I.17.2.
420. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.12
421. *HS.* pp. 190.ff.
422. *Pār. Gṛ.S.* II.2; *Āśv. Gṛ. S.* I.19; *Manu.* II.36; *Yāj.* I.11.
423. *Pār. Gṛ. S.* II.2; *Āśv. Gṛ. S.* I. 19; *HS.* pp. 216-218; *HDS.* pp. 276.f.
424. *HS.* pp. 212-233.
425. *Ibid.*, p. 234.
426. *Manu.* II. 68.
427. Vasiṣṭha q. *VMS.* I. pp. 337. f; *Yāj.* I.15.
428. *RV.* X. 85.36; V.3.2; *Śat. Br.* V. 6.10; *Ait. Br.* I. 3.5.
429. *Viṣ. P.* III. 10.13.

430. *Viș. P.* III. 10.24.
431. *Manu.* III. 34.
432. *Ibid.*, III. 23.
433. *Viș. P.* V. 26.f.ff.
434. *Viș. P.* V. 35.6.ff.
435. *Ibid.*, IV. 12.15-36.
436. *Manu.* III. 31; *Kauṭ.* III. 2: *Yāj.* I. 6.
437. *Manu.* IX. 93.
438. *Viș. P.* IV. 7.12-16.
439. *Manu.* III. 32.
440. *Viș. P.* IV. 1.11-12.
441. *Ibid.*, IV. ch. 6.
442. *Viș. P.* III. 18.87,88.
443. *Ibid.*, V. 35.4.
444. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.87.
445. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.92-93.
446. *Manu.* III. 29; *Gaut.* IV. 8; *Arth.* III. 2.
447. *Manu.* III. 28; *Gaut.* III. 9; *Arth.* III. 2.
448. Atlekar, *PWHC.* p. 45.
449. *Manu.* III. 27; *Gaut.* IV. 6.
450. *Manu.* III. 27; *Yāj.* I. 58.
451. *Viș. P.* IV. 1.67-96.
452. *Viș. P.* III. 10.25.
453. *Ibid.* III. 10.17.
454. *Āśv. Gr. S.* I. 5.1.
455. *Manu.* IV. 244.
456. *Viș. P.* IV. 1.62.
457. *Ibid.*, IV. 18.23.
458. *Ibid.*, IV. 10.4.
459. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.96.
460. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.12.
461. *Ibid.*, III. 15.7.
462. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 450.
463. *JIH.* XXX. p. 60; *IA.* XLVII (1919), p. 81; *Comp. HI.* II. p. 281.
464. *Ep. Ind.*, I, p. 383.
465. *Puri, IUK*, p. 88
466. *Viș. P.* IV. 15.38.
467. *Ibid.*, IV. 15.40.
468. *Ibid.*, III. 10.16.
469. *Viș. P.* IV. 15.34-35.
470. *Ibid.*, III. 10.17.
471. *Ibid.*, III. 10.19.
472. *Ibid.*
473. *Ibid.*
474. *Ibid.*, III. 10.20.
475. *Ibid.*, III. 10.21.
476. *Ibid.*, III. 10.22.
477. *Ibid.*
478. *Manu.* III. 10.
479. *Viș. P.* III. 10.17.
480. *Ibid.*, III. 10.21.
481. *Ibid.*
482. *Manu.* III. 8.
483. *Nār. S.* (strī 36).
484. *Viș. P.* III. 10.17-18.
485. *Manu.* III. 8,10; *Viṣṇu Dh. S.* 24.12-16; *Nār. S.* (strī) 36.
486. *Viș. P.* III. 10.16-22.
487. *Bhār. Gṛ. S.* I. 6.
488. *Manu.* III. 10; *Yāj.* I. 152.
489. *Viș. P.* III. 10.16.
490. *Ibid.*, V. 32.11.ff.
491. *Ibid.*, V. 26.11.
492. *Ibid.*, V. 35.4.
493. Macdonell, *Ved. Ind.* I. p. 478; Rapson, *CHI.* I. p. 86; Basham, *WWI*, p. 173; Majumdar, R.C, *VA.* p. 390.
494. *Arth.* III. 2.
495. *Mbh.Mausal.* 5.6; *Rāmā.* II. 34. 13, V. 9.66; VII. 32.16.
496. *Viș. P.* I. 15.77-78.
497. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.96.
498. *Pār. Gṛ. S.* I. 4.8-11.
499. *Viș. P.* I. 11.2-3.
500. *Ibid.*, IV. 10.4.
501. *Ibid.*, IV. 12.4.
502. *Ibid.*, 10.4.
503. *Ibid.*, V. 21.7; V. 22.1.

504. q. *HDS*. II. pt. II. p. 252.
505. Sarkar, *SSHI*. p. 79; *RV*. I. 167.6; X. 85.38.
506. *Jāt*. V. 225-227, 240, 243.
507. *Ibid*., V. 236-239.
508. *Mbh*. *Ādi*. 195.27-29; I. 206.2 (the case of Draupadī's marriage with five Pāṇḍavas); Ch. 196 (Jatila and Varkṣi) *SSHI*. pp. 149.ff.
509. *Viṣ*. *P*. I. 15.73.
510. *Ibid*., IV. 20.41-42.
511. *Mbh*. *Ādi*. 195.27-29; Ch. 196.
512. Pandey, *op. cit*., pp. 425.ff.
513. *Ibid*., pp. 428.ff.
514. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 13.8.ff; V. 38.1.
515. *HS*. pp. 432-435.
516. *Viṣ*. *P*. V. 13.8-9.
517. *Pār*. *Gr*. *S*. III. 10.16-23; *HS*. pp. 446.f.
518. *HS*. p. 447.
519. *Pār*. *Gr*. *S*. III. 16.35.
520. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 13.10.ff.
521. *Manu*. V. 58-105; *Yāj*. III. 1; *Pār*. *Gr*. *S*. III. 10.27.ff.
522. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 13.19.
523. *Pāra*. *S*. III. 1-2.
524. *Pār*. *Gr*. *S*. III. 10.46-47.
525. *Āp*. *Dh*. *S*. I. VI; *Yāj*. III. 15; *Manu*. V. 73.
526. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 13.11.
527. *Ibid*., III. 13.10.
528. *Ibid*.
529. *Ibid*., III. 13.11.
530. *Ibid*., III. 13.14-16.
531. *Āśv*. *Gr*. *S*. IV. 5: *Baudh*. *Gr*. *S*. I. 14; Pandey, *op. cit*., pp. 454.ff.
532. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 13.14.
533. *ṚV*. 1.24.12; V. 5.2.
534. *Ibid*., I. 116.
535. Das, *RVC*, pp. 237.ff.
536. Apte, *SRGS*, pp. 47-48.
537. Puri, *I*. *Pat*. pp. 92-93.
538. *Viṣ*. *P*. I. chs. 17, 18, 19 and 20.
539. *Ibid*., I. Ch. 18.
540. *Mbh*. 13.104.37; *Manu*, IV. 299.
541. *Viṣ*. *P*. IV. 19.12.
542. *Ibid*., I. 11.2-4.
543. *Ibid*., IV. 2.15.ff.
544. *Ibid*., I. 18.16.
545. *Ibid*., I. 18.17.
546. *Ibid*., I. 18.13.
547. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 15.7 (*mātāpitrostathojjhakaḥ*)
548. Das, *op. cit*., pp. 108, 241, 243, 307.
549. *Mbh*. *Ādi*. 74.38,52.
550. *Viṣ*. *P*. I. 13.42.
551. *Ibid*., IV. 19.13,
552. *Gop*. *Br*. III. 12; *Viṣṇu*. *Dh*. *S*. 15.44; *Manu*. IX. 138; *Rāmā*. 2.107.13; *Mbh*. I. 74.39.
553. *Vis*. *P*. IV. 2.49.
554. *Ibid*., IV. 19.16
555. *Ibid*., IV. 5.28
556. *Mbh*. III. ch. 127.
557. *Rāmā*. I. 8.8.
558. *Raghu*. I. 66,67,71.
559. Kādam. (*NSP*. 8th ed.), p. 138.
560. *Viṣ*. *P*. IV. 2.49.
261. *Ibid*., V. 23.2.
562. *Ibid*., IV. 1.8.
563. *Ibid*., V. 5.28.
564. *Ibid*., IV. 19.16.
565. *Sat*. *Br*. I. 42.9; *Tait*. *Saṁ*. 5.6. 5.3; *Pañch*. *Viṁśa Br*. 25.16.3.
566. *Rāmā*. I. ch. 16.
567. *Mbh*. I. 169.39-56.
568. *Viṣ P*. IV. 14.36.
569. *Ibid*., III. 16.12.
570. *Ibid*., IV. 14.36
571. *Viṣ*. *P*. III. 16.12
572. *Manu*. IX. 172.
573. *Manu*. IX. 171.
574. *Ibid*., IX. 166. ff.

575. *Viṣ. P.* V. 24.16.
576 *Ibid.*, III. 13.30.
577. *Ibid.*
578. *Ibid.* I. 15.81.
579. *Ibid.*, I. 18.45; III. 13.30.
580. *Ibid.*, III. 13.30.
581. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1.55; I. 15.81.
582. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.55.
583. *Ibid.*
584. *Ibid.*, V. 23.1; VI. 1.55.
585. *Ibid.*, III. 11.28.
586. *Ibid.*
587. *Ibid.*, I. 13.12; III. 11.29.
588. *Ibid.*, III. 11.30. V. 24.16.
589. *Ibid.*, I. 18.16-17; III. 7.30.
590. *Ibid.*, V. 24.16.
591. *Ibid.*, I. 13.24.
592. *Ibid.*, III. 7.30.
593. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.55.
594. *Ibid.*, III. 7.30.
595. *Ibid.*, I. 13.15; III. 13.30.
596. *Ibid.*, III. 7.30.
597. *Ibid.*, III. 6.12.
598. *Ibid.*, II. 6.12.
599. *Ibid.*, III. 11.30.
600. Altekar, *PWHC*, pp. 336. ff.
601. *Ved. Ind.* I. p. 484; *RVC.* pp. 238. f.
602. *Ved. Ind.* I. pp. 485. ff; *HDS.* II. pp. 368,575.
603. Oldenburg, *Buddha*, pp. 164. ff.
604. *PBI*, pp. 286-289.
605. *HDS.* II. p. 367.
606. *Ibid.*, pp. 577-578; *PWHC*, pp. 343.ff.
607. *PWHC.* pp. 344-347.
608. *Supra*, Conversion.
609. *Viṣ. P.* II. 15.14-15.
610. *Manu.* IX. 13-11.
611. *Ibid.*, IX. 13; V. 150-154; *Yāj.* I. 83-87; *Mbh.* III. 233. 18-19.
612. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 2.28-29.
613. *Ibid.*, III. 18.52. ff.
614. *Mbh. Anu.* ch. 23.
615. *Ibid.*, *Vana.* 232.4,5. ff, 29,32.
616. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.52-58.
617. *Ibid.*, I. 8.12-14.
618. *HDS.* II. p. 593; *PWHC.* pp. 316. f.
619. *Mbh.* I. 158.31; III. 206.46; *Rāmā.* I. 27.3; VI. 93.60.
620. *Manu.* IX. 32.
621. *Viṣ. P.* I. 13.73.
622. *Ibid.*, I. 13.74.
623. *Ibid.*, III. 12.30.
624. Thakur, *HSI*, pp. 126-127; Sehader, *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan people*, p. 391.
625. *PWHC.* pp. 117.44; *HDS.* II. p. 625; *HSI.* op. 132. ff.
626. *PWHC.* pp. 119. ff.
627. *Mbh.* I. 138.71-72 (example of Madri); *Ādi.* 95.65; 125.29; XVI. 7.18. four wives of Vāsudeva became *Sati*; XVI. 7.73-74 case of five wives of Kṛṣṇa; *Vana.* 23.3 (case of Sairandhri); *Rāmā.* III. 64.58 (the case of the wife of blind ascetic); VIII. 17.14-15 (the case of the mother of Vedavati).
628. *Viṣṇu S.* 20.26; Parā. S. IV. 26-28.
629. *Viṣ. P.* III. 18.60.
630. *Ibid.*, V. 38.2.
631. *Ibid.*, V. 38.3.
632. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 3.39. ff; cf. *Va.* 38.129. ff.
633. *PWHC.* p. 144; *SSHI.* pp. 78-79; *VA.* p. 390.
634. *Mbh. Adi.* chs. 95 and 103 (Satyavati approached Bhīṣma for *niyoga*); ch. 105 (Vyasa was appointed for it); chs. 105 and 120 (many stories of *niyoga*); vide *Ādi.* chs. 104 and 177; *Anu.* 44.52-53;

*Śānti* 72.12; for other references and examples of *niyoga* also see Winternitz's paper "*Niyoga in the Great Epic*," *JRAS*, 1897, pp. 716-732.

635. *Arth.* I. 17; III. 6.
636. *Vas. Dh.* S. 17.56.65; *Gaut.* 18. 4-14; Manu. IX. 59-61.
637. *Viṣ. P.* I. 15.51.
638. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.69; cf. *Vā.* 88.177.
639. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 4.71-72; cf. *Vā.* 99. 235. ff.
640. *Viṣ. P.* IV, 14.35.
641. *Ibid.*, IV. 14.37-38.
642. *Ibid.*, IV. 18.13.
643. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.38.
644. *Ibid.*, V. 23.4.
645. *PWHC.* pp. 166-167; *HDS.* pp. 596. f.
646. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 597.
647. *JOI.* (June, 1956), pp. 330. ff; *PWHC.* pp. 168-169.
648. *Rāmā. YK.* 117.27.
649. Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 169. f.
650. *Viṣ. P.* V. 20.27.
651. *Ibid.*, IV. 6.35,63.
652. *Ibid.*, IV. 5.12.
653. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.87.ff.
654. *Svapna.* Act. VI.
655. *Buddha charita*, IV. 44.
656. *IUK.* p. 90.
657. *pls. I. 4; II 3*; Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pl. XXXII, XXXIII.
658. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pls. XXVII and VI, Fig. 2; VII, Fig. I.
659. *Ibid.*, pls. V; IX. Fig. 1.
660. Vogel, *LSM*, pl. IV. a; XI. c; XII; Sastri (ed.) *Comp. HI.* II, pls. XLV. 1, XLVI, XLVIII. 1.
661. Marshall, *BAG*, pls. 69, 98, 27, 40.
662. *CHI.* I. pp. 99-101; *RVC.* pp. 200-201.
663. *PBI.* p. 117.
664. *SRGS.* p. 97.
665. *infra.* Ch. III.
666. *Viṣ. P.* I. 6.21-25.
667. Das, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.
668. *Viṣ. P.* II. 13.45.
669. *Jāt.* No. 415; III. 406.
670. *Suśruta Sthāna*, XXVII. 259.
671. *Nir.* I. 14.
672. *ABORI.* XXII. p. 256.
673. *Viṣ. P.* II. 15.13.
674. *Ibid.*, II. 15.12-13.
675. *Ibid.*, II. 15.13.
676. Kulluka, Comm. on *Manu.* V. 7.
677. See, *IC.* I. p. 413.
678. *Viṣ. P.* II. 15.12.
679. *Ibid.*
680. *Suśruta Sthāna* XXVII. 259.
681. *Mahā.* II. 307.
682. *Viṣ. P.* III. 13.1.
683. *ṚV.* VIII. 97.10; *Śat. Br.* II, 5.3.4.
684. *Aṣṭā.* IV. 4.67; *Pat.* on III. 1.26; *Jāt.* VI. 372; I. 486.
685. *Ved. Ind.* II. p. 415· *ṚV.* X. 71.2.
686. *Viṣ. P.* II. 15.12.
687. *Ibid.*, III. 11.84.
688. *Aṣṭā.* I. 1.57.
689. *Sel. Ins.* No. 49, p. 146; *Ep. Ind.* XXI. pp. 55.ff.
690. Puri, *IUK*, p. 97.
691. *RVC.* p. 205. f.
692. *Viṣ. P.* II. 2.18-19.
693. *Ibid.*, I. 2.60.
694. *Ibid.*, III. 10.6.
695. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.25.
696. *Ibid.*, I. 17.84.
697. *Ibid.*, III. 19.19.
698. Agrawala, *I. Pān.* p. 110.
699. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.82; II. 13-15.
700. *Ibid.*, III. 11.82.
701. *Ibid.*, III. 16.8.

702. *Ibid.*, II. 11.84; III. 16.3; IV. 24.95; III. 16.19.
703. *Ibid.*, III. 11.83; II. 15.30.
704. *Ibid.*, II. 15.13.
705. *Ibid.*
706. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
707. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.85.
708. *Ibid.*, II. 6.18.
709. *Ibid.*, V. 38.39.
710. *HSL.* p. 164; *RVC.* p. 202.
711. Apte, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.
712. *Viṣ. P.* I. 13.79,80.81.
713. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.54.
714. *Ibid.*, III. 16,11.
715. *Ibid.*, III. 16.2.
716. *Ibid.*, II. 15.30.
717. *Ibid.*, II. 2.6.
718. *Ibid.*, II. 4.58.
719. *Ibid.*, V. 15.22.
720. *RVC.* pp. 208. ff; *JASB.* XLII, pt. I. pp. 3. ff.
721. *SRGS.* pp. 118. f; *PBI.* p. 197; *Arth.* (tr.), pp. 147. f.
722. *Viṣ. P.* II. 2.6; II. 6.9.
723. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.33.
724. *Ibid.*, IV. 13.157.
725. *Viṣ. P.* II. 5.9.
726. *Ibid.*, III. 15.5; II. 6.22.
727. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.33.
728. *Ibid.*, III. 15.5.
729. *Ibid.*, I. 17.9, 11; IV. 11.19.
730. *Ibid.*, IV. 13.157; V. 25.5. ff.
731. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. VI. xxii. 1.
732. *CBMA.* pl. XIII, p. 93,95; *JRAS*, 1922-23, pl. XXXVII; *HFAIC*, pl. 33A; *JISOA*, VI. pp. 70. ff; *SIS.* p. 67, Fig. 58.
733. *SBE.* Vol. 26, p. 374; Vol. 41, p. 164.
734. *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, pp. 66, 88, 126, 391.
735. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.77.ff.
736. *Ibid.*, I. 9.108. ff.
737. *Ved. Ind.* II. pp. 145; *CHI.* I, p. 101.
738. Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
739. Kane, *op. cit.*, II. pp. 776.
740. *PBI.* p. 196.
741. *RE.* I.
742. *Viṣ. P.* II. 16.1-3.
743. *Ibid.*, IV. 2. 15. ff.
744. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 2.23.
745. *Ibid.*, V. 27.6.
746. *Ibid.*, II. 6.25.
747. *Ibid.*, II. 6.20.
748. *Ibid.*, IV. 24. 71.
749. *Ibid.*, III. 13.11.
750. *Ibid.*, III. 11.117.
751. *ṚV.* VI. 30.3; *Tait. Br. I.* 4.9; *St. Br.* II. 4.2-6.
752. *Tait. Saṁ.* II. 5.1.1.
753. *Chh. Up.* VII. 26.2.
754. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.69.
755. *Ibid.*, III. 11.71.
756. *Ibid.*. III. 11. 72-73.
757. *Ibid.*, III. 11.74.
758. *Ibid.*, III. 11.71.
759. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.71, 72-74.
760. *Ibid.*, III. 11.77.
761. *Ibid.*, III. 11. 78.
762. *Ap. Dh. S.*I. 11.31.1; *Vas. Dh. S.* X. 11.18; *Manu.* II. 5.
763. *Vām. P.* q. in *Gr. R.*, p. 312.
764. *Manu.* II.52; cf. *Mbh. Anu.* 104.57.
765. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.79.
766. *Ibid.*, III. 11.80.
767. *Vedavyāsa*, III. 67-68.
768. *Āp. Dh. S.* II. 8.19.3; *Manu.* IV. 65.
769. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.81.
770. *Ibid.*
771. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 759.f.
772. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11. 82.ff.
773. *Ibid*, III. 11.85.
774. *Ibid.*, III. 11.86.

775. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 765.
776. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.87.
777. Baudh. Dh. S. II. 7.2; *Laghu Hārita* 40: *Vrddha Manu* q. *Sm. Ch.* I, p. 223.
778. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.88.
779. *Ibid.*, III. 11.90.ff.
780. *Ibid.*, III. 11.74.
781. *Ibid.*, III. 11.109.
782. *Gaut.* IX. 39; *Baudh. Dh. S.* II. 7.36; *Manu.* II. 56; *Tait. Br.* I. 4.9; *Sat. Br.* II. 4.2.6.
783. *Gobh. S.* II. 38.
784. Marshall, *Mohenjodaro.* I. pp. 35.f.
784. Das, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-215; Macdonell, *op. cit.*, I. p. 292.
786. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 6. 59; V. 17.23; V. 19. 17.
787. *Ibid.*, III. 18.10; V. 17. 22; 18.40
788. *Ibid.*, III. 11.75.
789. *Ibid.*, V. 20.27.
790. *Ibid.*, III. 12.2.
7`1. *Viṣ.P.* III. 12. 24.
792. *Comp. HI.* II. XLI.
793. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. VII. 2.
794. Ghurey, *Indian Costumes*, Fig. 137, 138. 140, 141.
795. *Pls.I.* 3, 4; II. 34, 5; *cf.* Cunningham, *Bharhut*, p, 32. pl. XVII.
796. Cunningham, *Ibid.*, pl. XLI. 1.
797. Sarasvati. *op. cit.*, Fig. 31.
798. Coomaraswamy, *LSB.* pl, II. 2.
799. Foucher, *LBG*, I. Figs. 175. 176.
800. *Ibid.*, Fig. 226; II, Fig, 172.
801. *Ibid.*, I, Fig. 172;
802. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9. 20.
803. *Ibid.*, III. 13. 1.
804. Cunningham, *Bharhut*,, pl. XVII.
805. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pls. XVIII, XVI, XXVI.
806. *Viṣ. P.* V. 17. 22; 18. 20, 19. 17, 19.
807. *Ibid.*, V. 17. 23, 18, 20, 19. 17, 19.
808. *Ibid.*, IV. 15. 13.
809. *Ibid.*, III. 18. 15.
810. *Ibid.*, V. 9. 5.
811. *Ibid.*, V. 19. 14.
812. *Ibid.*, I. 11. 31.
813. *Ibid.*, VI. 6. 20, 22, 23.
814. *Ibid.*, III. 9. 20.
815. *Vā.* 97. 192; 30. 122-124; 30. 125.
816. Maisey, *op. cit.*, pl, XIII. 1, 2; Cunningham. *op. cit.*, XLII. 1; XLIII. 8.
817. *Vis. P.* IV. 24. 96.
818. *Ibid.*, III. 9. 20.
819. *Ibid.*, VI. 1. 53.
820. Marshall, *op. cit.*, II. pp. 509. ff; *Kala, SS.* pp. 24-26.
821. *RVC*, pp. 216-217; *VA.*, pp. 394, 459.
822. Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
823. *Vis. P.* V.13. 51, 53.
824. *Ibid.*, VI. 7. 89.
825. *Pl. VII. 5-9, 12, 13*; Barua, *Bharhut*, III, pl. XXXI. 25; LXVIII. 81, 82; *GBC.* II. Fgs. 11, 25, 25(a).
826. *Vis. P.* III. 7. 16.
827. *Ibid.*, V. 7. 16.
828. *Ibid.*, V. 6. 32.
829. *Ibid.*, V. 7. 16.
830. *Ibid.*, II. 5. 16.
831. *Ibid.*, V. 18.8.
832. *Ibid.*, V. 25.15.
833. *Viṣ. P.* V. 6.32.
834. *QJMS.* IX (1918-19), p. 127.
835. *Ibid.*, III. 7.16.
836. *Ibid.*, V. 18.38; 25.15.
837. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 55.13; V. 7.89.
838. *pl. VII. 2-4*; Cunningham, *Bharhut* (1879), pp. 35.f; pl. XLIX. 10-14. Barua, *GBG.* II. Fig. 11,20,25 (a).
839. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 35.f; pl. XLIX. 15-18; Barua, *Bharhut*, III pi. XXI. VII. 7; LXVIII. 81, 82.

840. *Viṣ. P.* III. 7.16; IV. 15.13.
841. *Ibid.*, II. 5.16; VI. 7.84; IV.15.13.
842. *Ibid.*, I. 12.45.
843. *Ibid.*, V. 20.86.
844. *Ibid.*, II. 5.16.
845. *Ibid.*, III. 7.16.
846. Whitehead, *PMC*. I. pl. XIX, XX. 238,240.
847. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 7.85.
848. Cunninham, *op. cit.*, (1879), p. 39.
849. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 7.85.
850. *RVC.* p. 216; *I. Pān.*, p. 131.
851. *Viṣ. P.* I.9.104.
852. *Ibid.*, V. 6.46.
853. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pls. XXI. 2, X.
854. *Viṣ.P.* IV. 15.13; VI. 7.84.
855. *Ibid.*, V. 7.16.
856. *pl. VII. 10,11*; Cunningham; *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37, pl. I. 1-8; Barua, *op. cit.*, III, pl. XXI. 28.
857. Barua, *GBG*. II. Fig. 11.
858. *QJMS.* IX (1918-19), p. 129.
859. Mackay, *Induṣ Valley*, p. 80.
860. Apte, *op. cit.*, pp. 58.ff.
861. *Ved. Ind.* II, p. 397; *CHI.* I, p. 101; *RVC.* p. 217; *ṚV.* VII. 33.1; I. 114. 1.5; VI. 55.1; IX. 67.11.
862. *Rāmā.* II. 99.25.
863. *Jāt.* I., pp. 137, 108; III. 541.
864. *Viṣ. P.* III. 12.3.
865. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.16.
866. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.17.
867. *Ibid.*, V. 30.37.
868. Barua, *Bharhut*, III, pl. XXIII top.
869. *Ibid.*, pl. XXX. 23 left side.
870. *Ibid.*, pl. XXXIX. 34.
871. *Ibid.*, pl. XXX. 23.
872. Fergusson, *op. cit.*, pl. XXX. 1; XXXII. 2.
873. *Ibid.*, pl. XXXV. 2.
874. *JISOA.* X. pp. 94.f; *I. Pat.* p. 107.
875. *LSM.* pl. XXX. b; *Comp. HI.* II. pls. XLV, XLVI.
876. Marshail, *BAG.* pl. 27.41.
877. *IUK.* p. 94; *IC.* XII, pp. 166-167.
878. *Viṣ. P.* III. 18.2.
879. *Ibid.*, III. 18.104.
880. Marshall, *op. cit.* pls. 37,59; 46.70.
881. *CHI.* I. pl. III. 1,2,3,4,5,6 etc.
882. Marshall, *Mohanjodaro*, I. pp. 33, 386.
883. *ṚV.* VII. 33.1
884. *Arth.* V. 19.
885. *Manu.* IV. 34-36.
886. *Yāj.* I. 131,133.
887. *Viṣ. P.* III. 18.104.
888. *Vā.* 69.229.
889. Barua. *Bhaahut*, pl. XXX. 23; Foucher, *LBG.* II. Fig. 392; II. 363.
890. Furgusson, *TSW.* pl. XXV. 1.
891. *Ibid.*, pl. XXXIV. Fig. 1-22.
892. *CCAI.* pl. X, XI, XIII, XIV etc.
893. PMC. I, pl. XVII. 36.
894. *Ibid.*, XIX. 211.
895. *Ibid.*, XX. 7.
896. *Mohejodro*, I. 33; cf. *JISOA.* VIII
897. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.19.
898. *Ibid.*, IV. 3.47.
899. Maisey, *op. cit.*, pl. XIII. 1, 2; Marshall, *BAG*, pl. 27.41, 25.35.
900. Vogel, LSM, pl. XVI. 9.
901. *AV* IV. 5.3; cf. *JISOA.* VIII. p. 70.
902. *I. Pān* pp. 131-132.
903. *Viṣ. P.* II. 5.11.
904. *Ibid.*, V. 20.1.
905. *Ibid.*, V. 20.4, 5.
906. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, pp.131-132.
907. *LSM.* pl. L. a; XVI. b: *Comp. HI.* II. pl. XLVIII. 1.

908. Kala, *SS*. p, 26.
909. *Vid. Inb*. I. p. 329; *JISOA*, VIII. pp. 69-70.
910. *Mbh, Karna*. 44. 18.
911. *Viṣ. P*. III' 11. 21; VI. 3. 34,
912. Aśvaghoṣa, *Saundarānaoda*, VIII. 50; *Buddha harita*. IX. 8.
913. Agrawala, *op. cit*., p. 131.
914. *Viṣ. P*. IIı. II. 21.
915. Agrawala, *op. cit*., p, 131.
916. *Ibid*.
917. *Saunearānanda*, IV. 31.
918. Label No. J 278 *Lcknow Museum*
919. Vogul, *Cat. Mat. Mus*. No. 129, p. 110;
920. Apte. *SRGS*, p. 57.
921. *Pān*. V. I. 110.
922. *Viṣ. P*. III. 12. 38.
923. *Baudh Sr. Sutra*, XVIII. 16, p. 361.
924. *Viṣ. P*. III. 12. 38.
825. Maisey. *Sanchi*, pl. X; Marshall, *Sanchi*, II. pl. 97.
926. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, XXXII; Motichanda, *Besa Bhusa*, p. 70.
927. Apte, *SRGS*, p. 57.
928. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 4. 99; III. 12. 38.
929. *Ibid*., III. 12. 38.
930. Cunningham, *op. cit*., pl. XXVII. 14; Maisey. *op. cit*., pl. VI. 2; VII. 2.
931. *Viṣ.. P*. IV. 4. 99.
932. *Comp. HI*. II, pl. XLI.
933. Moisey, *Sanchi*, pl. VII. 2; Marshall, *BAG*. pl. 40. 63.
934. *Viṣ. P*. V. 9. 5, 12.
935. *Āṣṭā* VI. 2. 74.
936. *Viṣ. P*. V. 20. 6.
937. *Aṣṭā*. III. 3. 99.
938. *Mahā*. II. 152.
939. Mehta, *op. cit*., p. 355.
940. *Jāt*. VI. 277.
941. *Pān*. IV. 4.43.
942. *Ibid*., III. 3.69.
943. *Jāt*. IV. 52; 277; *Pān*. VII. 3.36; Puri, *I. Pat*., p. 113
944. *Viṣ. P*. V. 20.21. ff.
945. *Viṣ. P*. V. 20.25. 25-27.
946. *Ibid*., V. 20.26.
947. *Jāt*. VI. 277.
948. .*Viṣ. P*. V. 20.26.
949. *Ibid*.,'V. 20. 67.
950. *Ibid*., V. 20.25.
951. *Ibid*., V. 20. 66-67.
952. *Lalitavistara*, XII, p. 152, line 16.
953. Barua, *Bharhut*, III. p. 67, Fig. 157
954. Foucher, *LBG*. I, p.172; Motichanda, *op. cit*., p. 119. Fig. 154.
955. *WWI*, pp. 37, 207; *Ved. Ind*. I, pp. 2-3; 156-157; *VA*. p. 392.
956. *Arth*. III. 20.
957. *Mbh. Sabhā*. 58.9; *Jāt*, VI.228. 282; VI. 138; *Mil. pañh*. pp. 144-327.
958. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 4.37.
959. *Ibid*., V. 28.11.ff.
960. *Ibid*., V. 28.13.ff.
961. Cuningham, *Bharhut*, pl. XLV.
962. *VA*. p. 368; *RVC*, pp. 221-222.
963. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 2.16.
964. *Ibid*., IV. 4.41.
965. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 13.40.
966. *infra*, ch. III.
967. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. XXII. 2.
968. Wilson, *Viṣ. P*. (tr.). 1840, p. 518, fn. 1.
969. *Viṣ. P*. V. ch. 9; Wilson, *Viṣ. P*. (tr.) 1961, pp. 414-415.
970. *Ibid*., V. 6.12, 31.
971. *Ibid*., V. 6.48.
972. *Ibid*., V. 9.8,
973. *Ibid*.,
974. *Ibid*., IV. 13.34, 43.
975. Ray, N.R., *MSA*, Figs. 27, 34, 35.

976. *Viṣ. P.* V. 9.8.
977. *Ibid.*, IV. 11.19.
978. Marshall, *Mohenjodaro*, I., pp. 44-45, pl. XCIV.8.
979. *RVC.* p. 236; *CHI.* I. p. 207; *PBI.* pp. 312-313; *Rāmā. Sk.* 10.35, 36.
980. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.102.
981. *Ibid.*, I. 17.9.
982. *Ibid.*, V. 13.47.
983. Wilson, *op. cit.*, 1961, p. 424, fn. 1.
984. *Viṣ. P.* V. 13.47.ff.
985. *Ibid.*, V. 7.46.
986. Wilson, *op. cit.*, 1840, p. 514, fn.3.
987. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pl. XVI. XV.
988. Ray N.R., *MSA*, Fig. 11.
989. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pl. XVI. a; Coomarswamy, *HII*, pl. XII. 43 and *pl. II. 4.*
990. *ASI-AR*, 1906-07, p. 145.
991. *CHI*,I. p. 103; RV. VII. 103. 7-8.
992. Mehta, *op. cit.*, pp. 342.ff.
993. *Ibid.*
994. *Viṣ. P.* V. 13. 51, 52.
995. *Viṣ. P.* I. 1.68.
996. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.68.
997. Barua. Bharhut, Figs. 34, 69, 136.
998. *Mbh.* VI. 17. 16; *Rāmā.* VI. 34. 27; *SK.* 6. 12; Asōkan, *RE.* VI.
999. *JAOS.* XIII, pp. 318.ff.
1000. *WAI*, p. 378.
1001. *Mbh.* VI. 17. 16; *Rāmā.* VI; 34.27.
1002. Dikshitar, *op. cit.*, p. 377.
1003. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 14.29.
1004. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.99.
1005. *Vāchaspatyam*, Vol. IV, p. 2715.
1006. *pl. VIII. 12, 22.*
1007. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 4.99.
1008. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, XV. I; XXXIII. 1,2,3.
1009. *pl. VIII. 4,6,16.*
1010. *RVC.* p. 234; *Ved. Ind.* II, p. 316; Mehta, *op. cit.*, pp. 313-334.
1011. *Viṣ. P.* II. 5.11; IV. 4.99.
1012. *Ved. Ind.* II., p. 316.
1013. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pls. XXVIII. 4; XXVI. 4.
1014. *Ibid.*, pl. XVI. I; XV. 1.
1015. Barua, *Bharhut*, Fig. 36.
1016. *pl. VIII. 10,25.*
1017. Basham, *WWI*, pl. XXXVII. 6.
1018. *Viṣ. P.* V. ch. 23; IV. 4.99.
1019. *pl. VIII. 9,15*; Maisey, *Sanchi*, XXVII, Figs. 15,16,17.
1020. *Viṣ. P.* II. 14.32; 15.11,32; IV. 9.-49; V. 6.32.
1021. *pl. VIII. 5,14,20*; Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. XXXV, Figs. 18-20.
1022. Barua, *Bharhut*, pl. XXXVII (b).
1023. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 4.99.
1024. *Vāchaspatyam*, Vol. V, p. 4200.
1025. *WWI*, pl. XXXVII (b).
1026. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.29; 14.28.
1027. *Padma Chandra Kośa* (1925), p. 88; *Sabda Kalpadruma*, Vol. I, p. 175.
1028. *pl. VIII. 5,11*; Maisey, *op. cit.*, pl. XI.
1029. *Viṣ. P.* II. 5.11; IV. 4.99; V. 20.77.
1030. *Viṣ. P.* II. 5.11; V. 20.71,72.
1031. *Arth.* V. 3; X. 6; *Rāmā. YK.* 10.4.
1032. *pl. VIII, 21*; Maisey, *op. cit.*, pl. XXV, Figs. 21,22.
1033. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 6.81.
1034. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.53.
1035. *Ibid.*, V. 6.2.
1036. *Ibid.*
1037. *Ibid.*, V. 38.41.
1038. *Ibid.*, V. 38.40.
1039. *Ibid.*, I. 9.98,108.
1040. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.18.
1041. *Ibid.*, V. 36.13.

1042. *Ibid.*
1043. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.109.
1044. *Ibid.*, II. 11.108.
1045. Sarkar, *SSHI*, pp. 52.ff.
1046. Chaudhary, R.K. *VAI*, p. 108.
1047. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.81.
1048. *Ibid.*, V. 5.22.
1049. *Ibid.*, V. 6.47.
1050. *Ibid.*, I. 9.116.
1051. *Ibid*,, IV. 4.99.
1052. *Ibid.*
1053. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, p. 125. pl. XXVIII.
1054. *Ibid.*, pl; XXXIII. 3.
1055. *Ibid.*, pl. XVI.
1056. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. VII. 2.
1057. Altekar, *GGGBH*. pl. XLVI.
1058. *Ibid.*, pl. XLVI. 87.
1059. *Ibid.*, XLVI. 71, 72, 74, 78.
1060. *Ibid.*, pl. IV. 1.ff.
1061. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9. 11.
1062. *Ibid.*
1063. *Ibid.*, II. 6.9.
1064. *Ibid.*, II. 6.8.
1065. *Ibid.*, 6.11.
1066. *Ibid.*, III. 24.71.
1067. *Ibid.*, III. 12.5. ff.
1068. *Ibid.*, III. 12.43.
1069. *Ibid.*, III. 12.43.
1070. *Ibid.*, III. 12.4.
1071. *Viṣ. P.* III. 12.1.
1072. *Ibid.*, I. 17.2; I. 20.29.
1073. *Ibid.*, V. 18.1.
1074. *Ibid.*, I. 1.4,12.
1075. *Ibid.*, V. 1.4.
1076. *Ibid.*, I. 20.29.
1077. *Rāmā. Kiṣ. K.* 20.18.
1078. *Viṣ. P.* V. 5.12-13.
1079. *Ibid.*, III. 11.15-16.
1080. *Ibid.*, III. 12.24,25.
1081. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.72.ff.
1082. *Ibid.*, III. 12.3.
1083. Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
1084. *ṚV.* IX. 112.
1085. *Ibid.*, X. 97.
1086. Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
1087. *Ibid.*, pp. 151.ff.
1088. Agrawala, *I. Pān.* pp. 120.ff.
1089. *Viṣ. P.* I. 17.88; VI. 5.3.
1090. *Ibid.*
1091. *Viṣ. P.* I. 17.88; VI. 5.3.
1092. *Ibid.*, IV. 20.37.
1093. *Ved. Ind.* II. p. 182.
1094. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 5.3.
1095. *Ibid.*
1096. *Ibid.*
1097. *Ibid.*
1098. *Pān.* V. 2.127.
1099. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
1100. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 5.3.
1101. *Ibid.*
1102. Monier William, *Sans. Eng. Dic.* p. 407.
1103. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 5.4.
1104. q. Agrawala, *I. Pān.*, p. 122.
1105. *Viṣ. P.* I. 17.88.
1106. Monier William, *op. cit.*, p. 360.
1107. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 5.3.
1108. *Ibid.*, I. 17.8.

Chapter IV

# Economic Life

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* does not give any exhaustive idea about the contemporary economic life of the people, though stray references are not lacking. The mention of a number of professions is indicative of the fact that these professions were current during the period under review and some of them are corroborated by other contemporary sources. Land was, of course, the primary source of livelihood, but people were interested in other types of commercial enterprise as well. Trade and commerce were also in an advanced stage in that period. A variety of coins served as the medium of exchange. In this connection it is interesting to mention the means of communication and transportation, with particular references to the types of carriages, carvanas and other vehicles are mentioned in our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa also throws light on the flora and fauna of the age.

*Agriculture* :

Vedic Āryans had made rapid strides in the field of agriculture. Agriculture and cattle-farming both were in existance in the society. There was need of rains for cultivating the land, and so people very much invoked Indra, the rain god, for pouring rains.[1] Several vedic hymns[2] reveal vedic people's knowledge of cultivation. Knowledge of cultivation appears to have made considerable progress.[3] The later vedic literature refers to the different seasons for the cultivation of different grains, operation of ploughing, sowing, reaping and threshing.[4]

Our Purāṇa also reveals that the contemporary agricultural society was in developed stage. The process of cultivation had become more perfect, and several crops were cultivated. Agricultural process has hardly undergone any change, despite political turmoils. The data, furnished by the Purāṇa, might not suggest innovations, but some interesting details are worth-mentioning like different types of land, agricultural implements, seeds and crops and other miscellaneous items.

The word *kṛṣi*[5] has been used by the Purāṇa. This term, as explained by Patañjali,[6] denotes not merely ploughing but all other operations of agriculture. So it included everything connected with agriculture.

It is essential to point out that in the vedic age the term *kṛṣṭi* denoted people in general who performed agriculture.[7] *Kinasa*[8] is another vedie term for the tiller of soil. Pāṇini uses *kṛṣivala*[9] for "one following agriculture as his profession." But our Purāṇa replaces all early words for the tiller of soil by using the word *karṣaka*.[10] This word probably stands for cultivators and agriculturists.

The Purāṇa,[11] like other ancient literary sources,[12] assigns the profession of agriculture to the vaiśyas. Manu[13] has forbidden this profession for the brāhmaṇas. Thus the vaiśyas were mainly following this profession, and it might have been a main source of their income. But some stories of the Purāṇa refer to the performance of agriculture by other *varṇas* also. King Pṛthu is said to have introduced the cultivation in society for the first time.[14] King Sīradhvaja[15] ploughed the field for the performance of sacrifice. During the time of distress, other varṇas have been allowed to follow the professions of the vaiśyas,[16] *i.e.*, cattle-rearing, agriculture and trade. It seems that under some circumstances other *varṇas* could also follow this profession.

*Agriculture holdings* : There are interesting references to different kinds of land and fields in the Purāṇa. A village included cultivated and uncultivated land. The lands, which were not under the cultivation, included *akṛṣṭā pachyā pṛthivī*,[17] *govraja*[18] (pasture) and *goṣṭha*[19] (cattle-pens). The term *kṣetra*[20] stands for the arable land. This is an

old vedic term pointing to the existence of individuals fields, carefully measured off, and fit for cultivation.[21] The area actually brought under the plough was called *kṛṣṭa*. The cultivated land was probably divided into separate holdings, and there might have been the boundaries of the field.[22] The Purāṇa is dead against the destroyers of the boundaries (*maryādā-bhedino*), and it prescribes a hell for them.[23]

*Agricultural Implements* : The plough is named in the Purāṇa as *hala*.[24] *Lāṅgala*,[25] a plough in the *Ṛgveda* and other sources,[26] was one of the synonyms of *śira* referred to in the Purāṇa.. The different parts of the plough are not found in our Purāṇa; but Pāṇini[27] refers to them as (*i*) the long wooden pole, (*ii*) the central bent portion called *potra* and (*iii*) the plough-share or *kuśi* fitted in the *potra* and made of iron. The other agricultural implements were *musala*[28] (wooden club to thresh the corn), *ullukha*[29] the *okhalī* in Hindi).

*Agricultural Operations* : From very ancient period, various stages of agricultural operations were known to the Indian people. The vedic hymns give us a picture of systematised agricultural operations.[30] The operations of agriculture are neatly summed up in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*,[31] as ploughing, sowing, reaping and threshing. In the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*[32] all these are distinctly mentioned. A few indirect references to the agricultural operations have been made in our Purāṇa. The field was ploughed by plough and bullocks. The ploughed field was called *halotkhātā*.[33] Farmers are mentioned to have performed the worship of their plough.[34] The Bodh Gaya[35] and Gandhara[36] sculptures depict the scenes in which two oxen are shown as carrying a plough. The Purāṇa does not give information about the methods of sowing, reaping and threshing.

*Agricultural Products* : The Purāṇa shows its acquaintance with many cereals, pulses and other kinds of agricultural crops. Rice of many varieties seem to have been cultivated. *Vṛihi*[37] (oryzasativa Graminae, a kind of rice), most popular agricultural produce in ancient India, is mentioned in the Purāṇa. It is a long and the swift growing variety of rice.[38] According to the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*,[39] it was

an autumnal crop. *Nīvāra*[40] and *Praśāntika*[41] are of wild and uncultured varieties of rice. *Anu*[42] (Panicum Miliacum) is generally regarded as a small grain consumed by poor people.[43] It is also a kind of rice which is cultivated throughout the hotter parts of India.[44] *Yava*[45] (barley), another kind of produce, is sown in the beginning of winter.[46] *Godhūma*[47] (wheat) is generally produced in northern India.[48] *Gavedhuka*[49] (Coix Barbata) is a kind of wheat which is generally cultivated in hotter and damper parts of India. Its kernel is used as a food medicine.[50] Different kinds of pulses have also been mentioned in our Purāṇa. *Chaṇakā*[51] (Cicer arietinum Legumino Seae, chanā in Hindi), is cultivated in temperate and tropical countries. *Kulattha*[52] (Dilichos Biflorus) is a kind of pulse. Pāṇini[53] mentions it as a flavouring ingredient. Kauṭilya[54] notes it as a crop grown at the end of the rainy season. *Mudga*[55] (Phaseolus Mungo), a kind of pulse, is called *munga* in Hindī. Patañjali[56] says that *mudga* takes sixty days to ripe like the *ṣaṣṭikā* rice. *Māṣā*[57] (Phaseolus Radiatus) is a kind of pulse having seeds with black and grey spots. It is ripened in the winter season. We are informed by Watts that in certain district the crop is cut, in other it is pulled out.[58] Another kind of pulse is *masūra*[59] (Ervum Hirsutum) which is also a cold-weather crop throughout India.[60] *Ādhakya*[61] (Cajanus Indicus Spreng) is another kind of pulse. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also contains references to the different kinds of oil-seed. *Sarṣapa*[62] (Bassica Compestin Var Sar Sen Cruci Ferae), a mustard-seed, is cold weather crop[63]. The oil is extracted from it. *Tila*[64] (Sesamum Indicum Pedalineae) is another kind of oil-seed which is cultivated all over India. Other agricultural produces, mentioned in the Purana, are *veṇuyava*[65] (barley from the bamboo), *markaṭaka*[66] (wild panic, *i.e.*, *makkā* in Hindī), *niṣpāvā*[67] (a kind of grain), *sana*[68] (Croto Lana), *koradūsa*[69] (*kodo* in Hindi), *hyūdāra*[70], *satīnaka*[71] (a kind of grain), *kovidāra*[72] (a kind of small grain), *priyāṅgu*[73] (a kind of panic seed), *śyāmaka*[74] (Echinochloa Colona Var Fumentacea, a kind of millet). *kulmāsa*[75] (Phaseolus Mungo Var Radiatus Leguminoseae) is an inferior kind of grain which is extensively cultivated all over India[76]. The Purāṇa does not refer to sugarcane directly, but it mentions the sea of the juice of sugarcane[77]. So the existence of the cultivation of the sugarcane cannot be questioned. Its cultivation

was a notable feature of ancient Indian economy[78].

Vegetable cultivation was not neglected in that age. The Purāṇa shows its acquaintance with some vegetables[79] such as, *alāmbu* (bottle-groud), *gṛñjana* (a kind of vegetable known as *gājar* in Hindī), *palāṇḍu* (onion), *piṇḍa-mūlakaṁ* (*saljam* in Hindī). A clear picture of the cultivation of vegetables can be marked in the Jātakas[80] and the *Arthaśāstra*.

*Irrigation*: Irrigation is an important part of agriculture. There were different means of irrigation in ancient India[81].

*Rainfall*: Indian agriculture has been called a gamble in the rains, because of the vagaries of the monsoon. The rainfall was one of the important sources of irrigation in ancient India. There are hymns in the vedas for rain-god and other sky deities to grant good rainfall for agriculture[82]. There are numerous references to the rainy season in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini[83]. Kauṭilya[84] has given an idea of the quantity of rainfall obtained in different parts of the country to suit different crops. He gives many details about rainfall. He was conscious of optimum rainfall because he believed that rainfall thrice a week was good and further, there should be eighty showers throughout the whole rainy season[85]. The *Mahābhārata* illustrates the importance of Sun-god in causing rainfall and making agriculture prosperous for mankind. Sage Dhomya advised Yudhiṣṭhira to pray to Sun-god to get food for the party accompanying him in the forests[86].

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also attaches importance to cloud and rainfall, and it says that the creation is nourished by the rain[87]. At one place, the Purāṇa describes the general mythological conception of rain. It runs as follows, "During eight months of the year the sun attracts the waters, which are the essence of all fluids, and then pours them upon earth as rain: from rain grows corn; and by corn the whole world subsists. The sun with his scorching rays absorbs the moisture of the earth, and with them nourishes the moon. The moon communicates, through tubes of air, its dews to the clouds, which being composed of smoke, fire, and wind (or vapour) can retain the waters with which they are charged, they are, therefore, called *abhras*, because their contents are not dispersed. When, however, they are

broken to pieces by the wind, then watery stores discend, bland, and freed from every impurity by the sweetening process of time."[88] The Purāṇa further says, "The waters that the sun has drawn up from the Gaṅgā of the skies he quikly pours down with his rays, and without a cloud; and men who are touched by this pure rain are cleansed from the soil of sin, and never see hell : this is termed celestial ablution. That rain which falls whilst the sun is shinning and without a cloud in the sky, is the water of the heavenly Ganges, shed by the solar rays. If, however, rain falls from a bright and cloudless sky whilst the sun is in the mansion of *Kṛttikā* and the other asterisms counted by old members, as the third and fifth and etc., the water, although that of the Gaṅgā of the sky, is scattered by the elephants of the quarters, not by the rays of the sun : it is only when such rain falls, and the sun is in the even asterisms, that is distributed by his beams."[89] There are also other references to the rainfall in our Purāṇa. It again says "the water of the sea, when swallowed up by submarine flame are recovered by the winds, and thrown, in the form of snow, upon the Himāchala, were coming into contact with the rays of the sun, they resume their watery nature."[90] Wilson, while commenting on the description of clouds says, 'It indicates accurate observation of natural phenomena. The waters of the ocean, converted into vapour by solar heat, are raised by the same influence into the air, and thence borne by the winds to the summits of lofty mountain ranges, which are arrested by a diminished temperature, descend in the form of snow, and again supply the streams that perpetually restore to the sea the treasures of which it is as perpetually plundered."[91]

The Purāṇa under review further gives clear references to heavy rainfall[92] in a story that once rainfall caused great loss to lives and property.[93] We are also informed by the Purāṇa that people were depending upon rainfall for cultivation.[94] In the same Purāṇa, Nanda says, "Śatakratu or Indra is the sovereign of the clouds and of the waters : sent by him, the former bestow moisture upon the earth, when springs the grain, which we and all embodied beings subsist; with which also, and with water, we please the gods : hence to these cows bear calves and yield milk, and a happy and well nourished. So when the clouds are seen distended with rain, the earth is neither

barren of corn, nor bare of verdure, nor is man distressed by hunger. Indra, the giver of water, having drunk the milk of earth by the solar ray, sheds it again upon the earth for the sustenance of all the world."[95] Thus it is evident that cultivators solely depended upon rain at that time also.

*Rivers* : Rivers must have another natural source of irrigation in ancient India since long time. Rivers have been venerated from the vedic age[96] onwards. Pāṇini refers to many important rivers[97] which served as the sources of irrigation. He also refers to the Devikā[98] the banks of which were specially suitable for growing paddy crops.[99] In the *Mahābhārata* practically all the rivers of the country have been mentioned, but the Gaṅgā and the part of the country through which it flows was regarded as the best.[100] Rivers must have served the pupose of irrigation in the age of our Purāṇa also. The Purāṇa refers to many rivers,[101] and it may be suggested that a few of them might have been used for irrigating lands.

*Wells and Tanks* : There are substantial evidences to show that wells and tanks were used for irrigation. The Jātakas inform us that tanks and canals were dug by co-operative effort and for irrigation.[102] Kauṭilya also refers to irrigation by tanks.[103] The *Mahābhārata* also speaks of the construction of tanks.[104] In the same epic, sage Nārada questioned Yudhiṣṭhira to know whether agriculture was merely dependent on rainfall or big tanks full of water which had been constructed in different parts of his kingdom.[105] Though our Purāṇa makes references to reservoir and thank,[106] it does not mention whether tanks were used for irrigation or not. Like earlier periods, people might have used tanks for irrigation. This fact can be confirmed by epigraphic evidences of pre-Gupta age, which supply copious illustration on the construction of tanks and reservoir. The Junagadha Rock inscription of Rudradāman informs us that the Sudarśana lake was excavated at the foot of the Girnara hill by the Governor of Chandragupta Maurya.[107] This reservoir had served the purpose of irrigation. King Khāravela of Kaliṅga claimed to have strengthened the embankments of springs and lakes at a large expense.[108]

The Purāṇa under consideration refers to *kūpa*[109] (well). It does not say whether the well served the purpose of irrigation or not, but it is evident from other contemporary sources that well was used for irrigation in that age. The Ara inscription of Kaniṣka II alludes to "a well dug by Dasafota.........for the welfare of all beings" on which the king threw a lac as a religious gift.[110] An Āndhra inscription of Śrī Pulumāyī's reign speaks of a well suuk by a Gahapālika.[111] A Sanchi inscription of the third century A.D. records the excavation of a well by a Śaka chief for perennial water-supply for all, and an inscription, of the second century in Kathiawad, says that a general of the time of the Kṣatrapa Rudra Siṁha caused a well to be dug and embanked in the village of Rasopadra for the welfare and comfort of all living beings.[112] The *Śukranīti*[113] also refers to the construction of well for irrigation.

*Drought and Famine*:

We have just seen that the rainfall was the main source of irrigation. The absence of rainfall might have caused drought and famine. The famine had always occurred in ancient Indian history. The earliest famine cry can be found in the *Ṛgveda*.[114] Instances, furnished by the oldest Buddhist[115] records, are clearly of short duration. Famines are referred to in the cities and a "heavy mortality" pithily appended, but the accounts are rare and brief. It is clear from the Jātaka story that in Kośala once there was a drought, and as a result of it crops withered and water dried up in the tank and pool, and fishes and tortoises burried themselves in the mud.[116] Elsewhere, the people of Kaliṅga are said to have taken robbery during the time of famine.[117] Kauṭilya[118] acquaints us with some provisions to face famine. The epic literature[119] is also replete with the references to famines and and drought in India.

The famine also occurred in the age of our Purāṇa and the Purāṇa refers to *anāvṛṣṭi* (drought) and (*durbhikṣa*) (famine). It knows the twelve year's drought in which the children of Viśvāmitra took the flesh of deer.[120] The occurrence of famines and droughts in Dvārakā[121]

and Kāśi[122] are also mentioned in the purāṇa. While mentioning the famine in the kali age the Purāṇa says that during that age people will be almost always in dread of death, and apprehensive of scarcity; and will hence ever be watching the appearance of sky; they will all like anchorets, live upon leaves and roots and fruits,and put a period to their live through fear of famine and want.[123]The Purāṇa again informs that oppressed by famine and taxation, men will desert their native lands, and go to those countries which are fit for coarser grains.[124] These references clearly show that the compiler of our Purāṇa was well acquainted with the famine and drought of that time.

### *Animal Husbandry and Animal Preservation*

The cattle-wealth of our country has an intimate bearing on its agriculture development, health and economic prosperity of the people. In ancient[125] India also cattle played an important part in the welfare of people and the progress of agriculture. In the vedic age,[126] many people followed the profession of rearing cattle. This profession also continued in the society of the epic age as we find in the *Mahābhārata*[127] that Duryodhana, went to see his herd of cattle in Dvaitavana, and marked them by signs, and then heard the singing and watched the dancing of the cowherds. In the *Virāṭa parvan*, it is mentioned that the king of the Matsya country went out into the country to enjoy a royal picnic on the occasion of "cattle branding" when the ears of the cattle were marked for the year.[128] The breeding and tending of cattle almost developed into a science in the epic days. We are told in the epic that Sahadeva, who takes service under king Virāṭa as a *tantipāla*, describes how, under his fostering care, cows multiply in a short time and free from disease.[129] The *Rāmāyaṇa*[130] is also full of the evidences of the profession of cattle-breeding. The Purāṇa lays great emphasis on animal husbandry, *i.e.*, *paśupālanam*. It is to be noted down that our text assigns the duty of cattle-rearing to the vaiśyas[131] for their livelihood. This fact can be corroborated by other literary sources. Like[132] the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Manu also attaches great importance to this profession. He makes it compulsory for the vaiśyas, and thinks it derogatory to a vaiśya not to keep cattle,

the auxiliary of agriculture,[133] for, when the Lord of creatures created cattle, he made them over to the vaiśyas. But there are evidences in our Purāṇa to show that other varṇas also took keen interest in cattle-rearing. It is clear from the Purāṇa that people, other than the vaiśyas, also reared the cattle. Nanda is said to have reared many cows and cattle.[134] Several kings have been mentioned to have tamed many cows.[135] Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa[136] and other yādavas showed their interest in the cattle-rearing. Thus, it seems to be clear that different castes, other than the vaiśyas, also took interest in this profession. This fact can be confirmed by other literary sources. The *Arthaśāstra*[137] advises a king to maintain the cattle of his state. The Jātakas mention brāhmaṇas,[138] kṣatriya and even the kings[139] who used to rear the cattle. We also read in the Buddhist literature that a *setthī* of Videha courtry lived on cattle,[140] and owned no less than 30,000 heads of cattle, of which 27,000 were milch cows.[141] A *Gahapati* is said to have enjoyed a bigger farm which had to be managed by as many as 1,250 cow-keepers.[142] Thus livestock and cattle-rearing were business of no particular section or of group or of agriculturists in the age of our Purāṇa.

*Cow-worship* : Cows were held in high esteem in society since the vedic age.[143] Their sanctity can also be marked in the epic age.[144] The same idea continued in age of Purāṇa. We read in the Purāṇa that once Kṛṣṇa said to Nanda that cows were their (Gopa's) deities,[145] and hence the former advised the people of Gokula to perform cow-worship (*go-yajña*).[146] The inhabitants of Gokula actually performed the cow-worship by decorating their cows, buffaloes and calves.[147] It seems that the usefulness of cow and the ox, for agricultural purposes and in the family economy, must have powerfully contributed to give the sacred-position to the cows.

Several ancient texts attach importance to the protection of cattle. We are told in the *Mahābhārata* that in the kingdom of Chedi, the lean cattle were never used for draught.[148] The epic, further, says that it is only in the dark days of the Kali men will employ cows and one-year old calves for drawing the plough and carrying burdens.[149] Skanda is said to have been appointed as the leader of divine hosts

for the well-being of cows and of the brāhmaṇas. King Dilīpa offered his own life for saving the life of his preceptor's cow named Nandinī.[150] Arjuna cousted exile in order to rescue a brāhmaṇa's cow. Conflicts arose among kings for taking possession of other's cows as is proved by the *Mahābhārata*.[151] In the age of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also people paid their attention on the protection of cows. It is clear from a story that once Indra became angry with Kṛṣṇa, and the former poured rain to destroy the cattle-wealth of the latter. The rain caused damage to the cattle-wealth. For the protection of cattle and the people Kṛṣṇa uplifted the Govardhana mountain.[152] This is, no doubt, a mythological story, but an inference may be drawn that people were always anxious to protect their cattle-wealth. The purāṇa further informs us that Indra conferred the epithet of Govinda on Kṛṇṣa because the letter protected the cows.[153] The titles like Nandarāja,[154] Vatsapāla[155] suggest that these epithets were most probably conferred on those who reared the cows and cattle.

The prohibition of cow-killing also helped the protection of cows. From the very beginning in Indian history, vigorous attempts were made for the prohibition of cow-slaughter and for the protection of the invaluable cattle-wealth.[156] In the *Rāmāyana*, cow-killing[157] and milking a cow just delivered[158] are regarded as great sins. The same idea can be found in our Purāṇa[159] also which criticises the act of cow-killing and it makes a provision of a hell for such heinous act.

In ancient India, people constructed cow-shed for the protection of cattle and cows. During the vedic age, large sheds or stalls were erected for the accommodation of cattle.[160] In our purāṇa two words *govāṭa*[161] and *goṣṭha*[162] have been used in the sense of cattleshed. The *goṣṭha* was regarded as pure, and no one was allowed to disrespect its sanctity and to make it impure.[163] It seems that *goṣṭha, i.e.*, cow-shed was most probably temporary structure for keeping the cattle.

*Cattle-fodder* : We cannot keep the problem of feeding of cattle aside because it is an important problem for the maintenance and production of cattle. Cattle-fodder and well-maintained pastures are the secrets of successful cattle husbandry. Kauṭilya gives full details

of feeding different types of cattle.[164] Draught oxen and cows were to be provided with subsistence in proportion to the duration of time, the oxen were kept at work and the quantity of milk which the cows supplied. All cattle were to be supplied with abundance of fodder and water.[165] The details of cattle fodder are not found in our Purāṇa but it only mentions the grass as the main fodder for cattle.[166]

In ancient India, the pasture land served the purpose of cattle-grazing. In the vedic age,[167] the word *vraja* indicated grazing ground. Kauṭilya[168] also pays more attention on the problem of pasture land and he advises cow-herds to graze the herds in forests which are severally allotted as pasture grounds for various season. The existence and maintenance of pastures can be marked in the *Mahābhārata* also which refers to the location of suitable pastures, for the cattle-wealth of Kaurava king, in beautiful forests of the country.[169] Manu,[170] too, mentions the provision of pastures both around a village and a city. We can get an idea about it in our Purāṇa which refers to the word *vraja* which stands for pasture land. It is clear from the Purāṇa that Kṛṣṇa and other cow-herd boys used to go to *vraja*, *i.e.*, pasture land to graze their cattle:[171] Forests were also used for grazing the cattle.[172] Other datails regarding pasture lands are lacking in the Purāṇa.

*Breeding* : Cattle-breeding is an important point to be mentioned here. It will not be out of place to mention that the cattle-breeding was prevalent in ancient India since long time. Pāṇini pays his attention on the problem of breeding of cattle. He has referred to the famous "Śālvaka" breeds of bulls reared in the Śalva country.[173] A detailed classification of all types of cattle has been given by Kauṭilya and such a classification depended mostly on the system of breeding.[174] In the epic, we are told that the youngest Pāṇḍava Sahadeva introduced himself as *tantipāla* of king Yudhiṣṭhira. He had also pointed out that he knew the breeding and branding of different types of cattle.[175] It is essential to point out that the references to the cattle-breeding in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* are so scanty that we do not get real picture of it. It is clear from a story that people showed their

respect to bulls.[176] Bulls also have been mentioned along with cows in the Purāṇa.[177] Thus the prevalence of breeding in this period can hardly be questioned.

In the age of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* the people used to rear other animals such as cat, dog, goat, horse, boar,[178] etc. But the taming of such animals has been highly criticised by the Putāṇakāra, who prescribes a hell for the tamers of such animals.[179] We may suggest that the taming of such animals did not get much respect as it was most probably followed by backward classes. The beasts and birds, wild and domestic animals, must have yielded a large variety of animals produce, *viz.*, skin, clow, horn, hoof, tusk, wool, etc. Animals like asses and camels, might have been used for carrying goods. Thus from the economic point of view many animals were tamed in the society. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa's* account on this aspect is traditional, and does not give us any new point on this score. Whatever descriptions, we have, are mostly known to us from other sources as well.

*Labour* :

The reference to labour in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is rather scanty and vague. It is clear from our Purāṇa that field-labourers (*kṣetriṇa*) were employed for ploughing the field.[180] Jaḍa Bharata is said to have been employed by his relatives as a field-labour for agricultural purpose.[181] The *Mahābhāsya* also mentions the employment of agricultural labour, which enables the cultivator to relax himself, and to do only supervision work.[182]

The Purāṇa passingly mentions the offering of food to a field-labour as his wages. The relatives of Jaḍa-Bharata are mentioned to have offered rotten food to the latter who was employed as a field-labourer by the former.[183] This contention is also supported by the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*[184] which refers to the labourers as getting *bhakta* or food in lieu of their wages. This shows the pitiable condition of the field-labourers. It appears that their income was very low, and they could hardly have sustained their lives.

*Forced-Labour* : The institution of forced labour was fairly common in ancient India.[185] The Jātaka stories give graphic pictures

of how it actually worked. The people of Kāśī had to serve their king's fiat who was passionately fond of hunting and forced his subjects to beat the deer in forest.[186] In the introductory portion of another story the gloomy prophecy is made when needy kings "shall set the whole country-folk to work for them . . ."[187] In the Mauryan period, the forced labour was regarded as one of the important resources both for the army and the kingdom.[188] The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya further supports the existence of the forced labour.[189] The epic literature also bears interesting references to it.[190]

The institution of forced labour is also known to our Purāṇa which refers to the worn *viṣṭi* for it. It is clear from a story that Jaḍa Bharato[191] was employed by the servants of Sauvira king's palanquin.[192] The prevalence of *viṣṭi* can be corroborated by many ancient law-givers.[193] The contemporary archaeological evidence further supports the existence of this institution. It is clear from the Junagadha inscription that though the system was prevalent in the Śaka age, Rudradāman finished the building of the Sudarśana lake without having corvee labour taxes or voluntary contributions.[194]

*Professions* :

By the vedic period, the society had crossed the primitive stage of economic life, and various arts and crafts had come into prevalence.[195] Rural industries also existed in society, and crafts had a tendency of being multiplied and subdivided. The crafts were in process of gradual evolution in the vedic age. During the age of Buddhist literature, several crafts also had made progress.[196]

Several professions and crafts also continued in the age of our Purāṇa. The scope of the term *śilpa*,[197] mentioned in the Purāṇa, can be explained with the help of other literary evidences. Pāṇini mentions *śilpa* as a general work denoting both fine arts, like dance and music,[198] and crafts.[199] Dancers, musicians and instrumentalists are all mentioned in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as *śilpins*.[200] The Brāhmaṇa literature[201] also includes dance and song in *śilpa*. Kauṭilya[202] considers proficiency in military science as a *śilpa*, and trained soldiers have been mentioned as *śilpavantaḥ padatāḥ*. Thus, it appears that *śilpa* had got

wide connotation, and different kinds of professions were included in it in ancient period.

Our Purāṇa refers to *kārū karma* as a means of livelihood for the śūdras. It further goes to say that during the Kali age, the vaiśyas will follow the *kārū karma*. Thus it appears that the vaiśyas and the śūdras both followed this profession. Though the Purāṇa refers to *kārū karma*, it does not explain the term. But this term can be explained with the help of other literary sources. The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* refers to worker in handicrafts as *karī*,[204] and the Kāśikā explains the term *kārū* as weavers. *Karī* is not mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*,[205] but the term *kārū* is mentioned along with *śilpins*. On the basis of Kātyāyana,[206] it may be suggested that the term *kārī* stands for artisan. The scope of the profession of artisan was very wide. Pāṇini refers to the village artisans as *grāmaśilpins*,[207] *i.e.*, village carpenter (*grāma takṣa*),[208] potter and barber. Patañjali[209] ordains that in each village there were at least five artisans, amongst whom the potter, black-smith, carpenter, barber and washerman are included. Pāṇini also mentions different classes of artisans.[210]

Different kinds of professions and crafts can be marked in our Purāṇa also, and they are as follows :

*Carpentry* : Carpentry, a popular profession since the vedic age,[211] is mentioned in the Buddhist literature,[212] and the epics.[213] This profession also seems to be one of the popular professions in our Purāṇa and it mentions the use of chariots[214] in wars, and the construction of self-moving chariots for the deities.[215] Chariots were constructed by carpenters. Next to the construction of chariots, carpenters had to construct other wooden articles. The Purāṇa is well acquainted with boat[216] and carts[217] (*śakaṭa*). These articles were constructed by carpenters. This fact can be corroborated by the Buddhist literature which mentions that carpenters had specialised themselves for constructing boats and ships,[218] carts and chariots[219] of all sorts and machines.[220]

The Purāṇa refers to various types of furniture such as *bāla-prayaṅka*[221] (small cot), *dārumayī śayya*[222] (wooden bed), *āsandi*[223]

(chair) and wooden *śibikā*[224] which must have been constructed by carpenters. The village carpenter played an important part in rural economy, and the various agricultural implements, mentioned above, must have been made by him.

The Purāṇa refers to *krakachaiḥ, kuṭhāra*[225] which were the implements of a carpenter. An inscription, belonging to the Kuṣāṇa age, records the dedication of a lady belonging to the carpenter class.[226]

*Smithy* : The profession of a smith is also an ancient one. The *karmāra*, as it is clear from *Aṣṭādhyāyī*,[227] occupies an important position among the artisans. This profession also appears to be in a flourishing condition in the Buddhist literature.[228]

Smiths prepared different things from iron. Different kinds of weapons such as *khaḍga* (swords), *vāṇa* (arrow), *dhanuṣa* (bow), *parigha*, *triśūla*, etc. mentioned in the Purāṇa, might have been prepared by them. So the manufacture of weapons for war seems to have been an important job of smiths. The Buddhist literature, too, refers to the construction of weapons by them.[229]

The references to *śarakarta*[230] and the maker of *karnī*[231] arrow in the Purāṇa show that black-smith's craft had attained specialisation to a great extent. But the Purāṇa highly condemns such profession.[233] This profession of arrow-maker also existed even in the Buddhist age. A section of people used to earn by manufacturing arrows only. In the *Dhammapada*[233] and the *Therigāthā*,[234] a blacksmith has been referred to as straightening or ending the arrow. We read in the Jātakas[235] that a maker of an arrow heats an arrow in a pan of coal, wets it with sour rice-gruel and closing one eye, looks with the other while he makes the arrow straight. From the *Milinda-pañho* list of crafts practised in town, it appears that the art of arrow-making, while being separate from that of the smith, was separate even from the manufacturer of bows and of bow-strings (*jīyakāra*) apart from any ornamental work there upon. Hence, it shows that arrow-making was a separate craft from the general smithy even during the Buddhist age and it continued to be in the age of our Purāṇa.

*Potter* : The profession of potter, whose antiquity goes to the pre-historic period,[236] played an important role in ancient India. The Buddhist[237] literature and the *Mahābhārata*[238] are well acquainted with potter and his profession. The latter[239] even refers to the preparation of earthen pots on the potter's wheel in different conditions when they are wet, or are being burnt in the kiln. This profession can also be marked in our Purāṇa which refers to the wheel of potter, i.e. *kullāla-chakra*[240]. So the prevalence of potter in the age of the Purāṇa can not be questioned. The Purāṇa is also well-acquainted with the work of baking of bricks and vessels[241] in fire, and these works must have been done by potters. But such works were highly condemned in that age.[242] It shows the low status of potter in society. People were also acquainted with various types of vessels such as *kumbha*,[243] *bhāṇḍa*[244] (larger vessel), *ghaṭa*[245] (vessel), etc. These vessels must have been made by potters. The Jātakas[246] also tell us that there existed potter's villages where various types of vessels were made. From the archaeo-logical as well as literary evidences it is quite clear that the potter's art was in an appreciably flourishing condition during the pre-Gupta age. The Purāṇa also makes reference to toys[247] which must have been prepared by potters. This is supported by the large finds of beautiful terracotta figurines[248] from the Śuṅga and the Kuṣāṇa age at several sites of Northern India.

*Barber* : Though the Purāṇa does not refer to the term *nāpita*, we have ample evidences to show that the profession of a barber was prevalent in that age. We get references to this different styles of hair-dressing in the Purāṇa.[249] People might not have cut their own hair with their own hands, but they must have taken the help of a barber. The *chūḍā karma*[250] ceremony is mentioned in the Purāṇa, and a barber has an important part in this saṁskāra.[251] The existence of this profession can be confirmed by other literary sources[252] also.

*The Washerman and Dyer* : The profession of a *rajaka*, another important livelihood, is mentioned in several literary sources[253] and in our Purāṇa also, and the latter refers to a class of washerman and dyer (*rajakaṁ raṅgakārakam*).[254] The washerman most probably used to keep many coloured dress for washing.[255] The Purāṇa does not give

a true picture of this profession. We find in other sources that the dyer and washerman were probably the same, but different from the dye-manufacturers.[256] He also knew how to remove the dirt of a cloth without destroying the dye.[257] Regarding his terms of business, Kauṭilya lays down numerous rules and regulations.[258] In the smṛtis, the profession is regarded as a dishonoured one, and even penances are prescribed for those who either live on this or accept the goods touched by a washerman.[259] This shows the low status of washerman in society.

*Masons and Architects* : To this profession belonged the architects. In the Jātakas, the building of a king's palace was the venue of as many as eighteen manual arts.[260] Among them, the foremost place was that of the architect. In the *Mahābhārata*[261] masons are known as *sthāpatyaḥ* and *saudhakāra*. The art of constructing citadels appears to be well-developed in the Purāṇa which refers to God Viśvakarmā who constructed beautiful palaces for the wives of sage Saubhari. It is further clear from the Purāṇa that Hiraṇyakaśipu[262] had a big palace; and Kṛṣṇa is said to have laid the foundation of the city of Dvārakā, which was defended by high ramparts, and beautified with gardens and reservoirs of water; crowded with houses and buildings.[263] The fort of Bāṇāsura was also well-defended by high walls. The mason and architects must have played an important part in constructing the forts and their ramparts. The architects or masons probably supervised the construction of buildings or actually took part in laying bricks, as one finds in the Jetavana monastery scene in Bharhut sculptures,[264] where the foundation is filled with golden pieces.

*Domestic Servants* : They were generally engaged by rich people in society. The word *bhṛtya* was used for the servant who used to attend on his master. We are told in the Purāṇa that the wives of sage Saubhari cared for their servants, and offered them different kinds of food.[265] *Kiṁkaras*[266] were the domestic servants probably required for household work. *Dhātri*[267] was a maid-servant or a nurse who used to take care of children. Kaṁsa appointed maid-servants for rubbing unguents on his body.[268] It is clear from the *Mahābhārata* that the main purpose of the maid-servant was to dress the hair, to prepare

unguents, and to make beautiful and variegated garlands for royal harem.[269]

*Cooks* : A few people were engaged to prepare food and hence, the cooking was also a kind of profession in ancient India. The cooks have been called *odanika*[270] and *sūda*[271] in the Buddhist literature. The *Arthaśāstra* refers to them as *bhojanadātṛ*.[272] The *Mahābhārata* mentions to *sūdas* who were skilled in preparing curry and other food articles.[273] The cooks or *sūdas*[274] are mentioned in our Purāṇa also and they were appointed by the rich persons and kings[275] for the preparation of food.

*Worker in Leather* : The profession of a shoe-maker is known from the *Mahābhārta*[276] which refers to *charmakāra* as forming a separate class of people in the society. The Great epic also mentions leather tanners[277] and trade in leather.[278] The *Rāmāyaṇa*[279] is also familiar with the shoe-maker. Our Purāṇa does not directly refer to shoe-maker, but it refers to upānaḥ,[280] *i.e.*, shoe. So it is natural to presume that the profession of shoe-maker was prevalent in the age of our Purāṇa. We do not get clear idea about this class. But in the Smṛti literature,[281] the worker in leather is enlisted among the artisan group, and the *Viṣṇu Smṛti*[282] considers it as a dishonoured profession.

*Weavers* : Weaving is a very old profession as it is evident from the epic literature.[283] In the *Rāmāyaṇa*,[284] the weavers are known as *sūtrakarma viśāradaḥ*. Patañjali refers to *tantuvāya* among the low profession.[285] The Purāṇa does not refer to this profession. But the existence of this profession cannot be questioned as the Purāṇa refers to several garments[286] which must have been woven by weavers. The status of weavers can be gleaned from the Smṛti literature[287] where they have been put into a separate class of profession. In one Smṛti[288] they are included among the artisan class.

*Wine-makers and Sellers* : The profession of preparing wines also attracted the people in ancient time. Pāṇini[289] and Kauṭilya[290] refer to the preparation of different kinds of wine. The Epic literature[291] mentions the sellers of *soma* as the most degraded

persons. The business of manufacturing wines was assigned to a particular class known as *Maireyakas*.[292] The profession of selling of wine can also be found in our Purāṇa. The sellers of wine were known as *somavikrayī*.[293] They have been criticised in the Purāṇa, and a hell has been assigned to them.[294] The Purāṇa[295] is dead against for inviting such persons in the religious ceremony. Thus it is clear that this profession was not respected in the society. Several kinds of wine,[296] i.e. *madya*, *surā*, *soma*, *madhu*, etc., were used in the age of our Purāṇa. So the distilling of liquor can hardly be questioned in that age. Other sources tell us how liquor was distilled. Pāṇini speaks of the process of distilling[297] of wine. The Buddhist texts inform us that rice and fruit-mixture,[298] and sugarcane[299] were utilized for extracting liquor.

*Grāma-yājaka* (*Village-Priest*) : The *grāma-yājaka*, *i.e.*, the village-priest might have earned money by performing worship in villages. Their status was very low as they were not to be invited in the *śrāddha* ceremony.[300] The Purāṇa prescribes a hell[301] for a village-priest. It may be conjectured that the village-priests might have engaged themselves in making profit by worshipping the village-deities and spirits. The reason for criticising this profession does not seem to be evident in our Purāṇa.

*Mahiṣaka* : Our Purāṇa[302] refers to *mahiṣaka*. The commentator of the Purāṇa, quoting a text from the smṛti, opines that this term means a person who lives by his wife's prostitution.[303] This profession might have been a means of income, even then the Purāṇa[304] prescribes a hell for its followers. It clearly shows that prostitution was in vogue in this period but it was condemned in society.

*Public Performers* : The Purāṇa[305] refers to the public performers as *raṅgopajīvī*. It appears that a section of people might have followed the profession of entertaining people to earn money. But they had got no respect in the society as the Purāṇa[306] appears to be dead against them.

*Garland-makers and Perfumers* : People of the age of our Purāṇa were fond of flowers and perfumery. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have been

described as wearing garlands of flowers.[307] The ocean is stated to have presented a lotus flower-garland to Lakṣmī.[308] The Purāṇa is also familiar with the garland-maker, *i.e.*, *mālākāra*.[309] The existence of this profession can be confirmed by the Buddhist literature[310] and the *Mahābhārata*,[311] and the latter refers to garland makers who used to make beautiful garlands of flowers.

The profession of a perfumer was also prevalent in the society of ancient period. In the Jātaka age perfumery was a highly specialised art.[312] The sandal wood was rubbed into a paste, or oil was extracted out of it which was used along with aloe as toilet.[313] Chemical compounds of different scents were also known.[314] Other Buddhist texts[315] throw ample light on the existence of this profession. The passages of *Mahābhārata*[316] also clearly point out the prevalence of this profession. The perfumer's art had a good demand among the rich and fashionable people and consequently commanded respectability.[317] The Purāṇa[318] under review also refers to the use of perfumes. So it is natural to presume that some people might have engaged themselves in the preparation of scented articles. The existence of profession can be corroborated by the inscriptions of the Karle Buddhist Cave[319] and Pitalkhora Buddhist Cave.[320] An inscription of the Kuṣāṇa period also refers to the perfumers.[321] The three Brāhmī inscriptions from Mathura record the dedication made by perfumers.[322] From these inscriptions it appears that this profession was in a prosperous state in the pre-gupta age.

*Profession of Astrology* : Some people made astrology as a source of their livelihood since the vedic age.[323] The Jātakas[324] also mention the fortune tellers. The Great Epic speaks of *daivajña*[325] and *sāmudrika*[326] which correspond to the astrologer and palmist respectively. It is also clear from the same epic that the king had to employ the astrologers who were skilled in reading and interpreting omens, and were competent to neutralise the effects of disturbance of nature.[327] The Purāṇa,[328] by referring to *nakṣatra sūchaka*, *i.e.*, an observer of the stars for the prediction of events, clearly shows the existence of astrologers in the society. But an astrologer has been highly condemned in the society as the Purāṇa prescribes a hell for him.[329]

This fact can also be corroborated by the evidences of the *Manu Smṛti*[330] which excludes the astrologers from *śrāddha.* The Smṛti also forbids the practice of astrology to ascetics.[331] The reason for the condemnation of this profession is not clear.

*Medical profession* : The medical profession, whose antiquity goes to the vedic age,[332] was in vogue in the epic age.[333] The *Mahābhārata* speaks of the advanced stage of this profession.[334] The physicians were well known as vaidyas[335] and chikitsakas.[336] The science of medicine and various chemical compounds, applied in diseases, have been mentioned in the epic.[337] This profession has also been mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[338] which refers to Dhanvantari, the god of physicians. Many *grāma-auṣadhis*[339] are also mentioned in the Purāṇa. These herbs might have been used in the preparation of medicine. Many kinds of diseases can also be marked in our text.[340] The technique of keeping the dead body into oil was known in that age.[341] The *Rāmāyaṇa*[342], too, supports the prevalence of such technique.

*Profession of Oilmen* : The extraction of oil from oilseed was another kind of profession. The Purāṇa refers to oil,[343] oil-man[344] and his wheel[345] (*chakram*). The Mahābhārata also knows the oil-man (*tailika*)[346] and the process of extracting oil from the oilseed with the help of some machine or oil-pressure.[347] This profession has been mentioned by Manu,[348] too, who considers oil-men as an impure. The reference to this profession in the Nasika cave inscription[349] clearly shows its existence in the first and second century A.D.

*Workers in Metal* : These included goldsmith who could make different kinds of gold ornaments. The profession of goldsmith was known from different sources.[350] Our Purāṇa refers to jewellers (*bhuṣaṇāṇāṁ cha sarveṣāṁ kartā*),[351] *i.e.*, the fabricator of ornaments. It is evident from the Purāṇa that several types of ornaments,[352] such as *valaya* (bracelet), *kuṇḍala, karṇikā, keyūra, kirīṭa, mukuṭa,* etc., were used by people. So the work of goldsmith was in flourishing condition as is suggested by the mention of a number of precious metals and various ornaments.

In addition to ornaments, golden pot (*hema-pātra*,[353] *hiraṇya-pātra*),[354] *kamaṇḍala*, *kalaśa*, *sthalī* and similar objects seem to have been manufactured by metal workers. The Purāṇa does not refer to coppersmith and goldsmith, but their existence in the economic life can hardly be questioned.

*Pearls, Gems and Precious Stones* : The art of skilfully cutting stones was well-known even in the Buddhist age.[355] We often get references in the Buddhist literature to *Belurīya* cut into eight facets, well polished, and made perfect from all aspects.[356] Different kinds of gems have been mentioned in the Sūtras of Pāṇini[357] and Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*.[358] It is clear from the Jātakas that gold ornaments were set with gems. So it seems that cutting of gems and precious stones into various shapes and polishing them was a specialised art by itself. The setting of gems or ornaments was the work of goldsmith. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also knows the different kinds of precious stones such as *Vaidūrya*,,[359] *Indranīla*,[360] *Maṇī*,[361] *Saṁkha*,[362] etc. So there must have been workers to cut the precious stones for giving them various shapes.

*Fishing and Meat Production* : This group includes professions like those of hunters, fishermen, catchers of birds, etc. Meat was freely eaten in the society and this had given rise to the industries of fishing and slaughtering or hunting animals. Hunting appears to be an important profession in the vedic age[363] and thereafter[364] also. Their occupation was to capture or to kill animals and to earn money by selling them. The meat of several animals were also eaten in the age of our Purāṇa.[365] So the profession of slaughtering or hunting animals cannot be question. Hunter is known as *lubdha*[366] in the Purāṇa. The occupation of hunting was practised by the hunters who killed animals by shooting with bows and arrows[367].

The Purāṇa is dead against the profession of a hunter.[368] The Smṛti literature also regards it as low-profession. We are informed by Manu that the occupation was followed by the mixed castes such as the Medas, Āndhras, Mudgas, Kṣattras, and Uggas.[369] The Jātakas also inform us that mainly the Niṣādas were engaged in hunting. But

the hunting was not only confined to hunters as we have already seen that some kṣatriyas or even kings used to go a hunting[370] for entertainment. It is essential to point out that Purāṇa[371] assigns a hell to a hunter only, but not to the kṣatriyas who killed several animals in hunting for their entertainment. Thus, the Purāṇa has shown the disparity between the upper class and the lower class. We may here conjecture that this profession was generally followed by backward, low and depressed class of people, so our Purāṇa has looked down upon this profession.

The catching of birds was also a kind of profession. The Purāṇa refers to the śākunika,[372] *i.e.*, fowler. The details of this profession can be seen in other texts. It is clear from the Jātakas that birds were caught with snares and nets.[373] The *Mahābhārata* describes the fowler as catching birds with the help of traps.[374] In the same epic, a fowler is mentioned as armed with his implements and equipments necessary for catching birds which consisted of a staff, a sharp pointed iron stick, nets, strings and iron cages.[375] In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[376] a hell has been assigned to a fowler. This shows the low-status of a fowler in the society.

Fishing was another kind of profession. The Purāṇa mentions *matsyabandhai*[377] (net) *matsyaira*[378] (fishermen) and *kaivarta*[379] (ferrymen). The Buddhist and epic literature throw ample light on this profession. It is clear from the Jātakas that fishermen lived in colonies in large number at one and caught fishes in the rivers.[380] They used net and basket-traps, etc., for fishing.[381] It is also clear from the *Mahābhārata* that fishes were trapped in the nets[382] and were caught with the help of iron-hook.[383] It is further clear from the Purāṇa that a hell has been assigned to the *kaivartas*, and hence, it appears that fishermen were not respected in society.

The assignment of hell for a number of professions indicates that from the orthodox point of view certain professions were taken as ignoble. But in spite of such prescriptions, religious or otherwise, people followed these professions simply to maintain their life. The descriptions with regard to the various profession in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*

is mostly conventional and follows the set pattern of thinking already envisaged in earlier smrti and other allied literature. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* does not make out a single point of importance relating to the various professions in society. Whatever we see here is already discussed in details in the Jātakas. Minor variations with regard to details about the professions might be due to local conditions obtaining in different regions.

*Transport* :

Facilities for transport, means of communications, particularly the types of carriages, and travelling in company, are other interesting items of economic life. Transport seems to be the life-blood of trade and industries of a country. If agriculture and industry are the body and bones of a national organism, means of transport is the key to the unlocking of the country's wealth. Among the means of transport of a country, we generally include both the vehicle and the high way. Transport can be classified into (*a*) land, (*b*) water and (*c*) air.

Our Purāṇa throws very little light on the means of conveyance and transport. The *Śibikā* or palanquin seems to be an important means of transport in the age of our Purāṇa.[384] It was carried on by a few men[385] who were called *Śibikāvaha*.[386] This showsth at men, on certain occasions, where employed by kings as a beast of burden to carry the load of kingly class. Our Purāṇa[387] is not clear on the wages of the men who carried the palanquin; but it is obvious from a story that forced labourers were employed for that work. So the forced labourers, employed for carrying the palanquin, would not have been given any wages. It is also clear that *Śibikā* was generally used by the aristocratic and rich class. This conveyance was certainly beyond the reach of poor people. The Purāṇa informs us that the *sibika* was generally made of wood.[388] The existence of *Śibikā* is known in the epic literature.[389] The contemporary sculptures also support the prevalence of this means of conveyance in that age. Two types of *Śibikā* have been depicted in the Amaravati sculptures.[390] In one type a small parasol has been attached to it and another type seems to be like a house or *maṇḍapa*.

*Chariot*: Among other units of conveyance on land in ancient India, chariots and carts, drawn by oxen and horses, were most popular. This was also an important means of conveyance from very early times. The vedic literature contains very interesting references to it.[391] Other texts[392] also attest to the existence of chariot as a means of communications.

The use of chariots continued in the age of our Purāṇa. Chariots were used by kings[393] and queens[394] and other rich people. The chariots were generally drawn by more than one horse.[395] We may further note down that our Purāṇa shows its acquaintance with the different parts[396] of chariot, such as *varūtha* (protecting funder), *anukarṣa* (floor), *upāsaṅga* (place for keeping the arms), *patākā*, (banner), *īsādaṇḍa*,[397] *sārdha*, *chakra* (wheel), and *yugārddha*.[398] The chariots, yoked with many horses, have been depicted in the contemporary sculptures of Sanchi[399] and Bharhut.[400]

*Śakaṭa*[401] (*Cart*) : Another means of conveyance on land was cart in ancient India. The cracking of a cart is referred to in the *Ṛgveda*[402] as like the sound heard by night in the forest. Cart has been referred to in other vedic literature.[403] In the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, *śakaṭa* denotes a cart for carrying goods, with sturdy bulls yoked to it.[404] In the Buddhist sources numerous references have been made to merchants carrying their goods and merchandise in carvans of 500 carts.

The *śakata* (cart) was in use in the age of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[405] The Purāṇa mentions a cart, which was full of many pots.[406] This shows that people used to load their goods on cart for carrying them from one place to another. The cart occupied very important place in the life of the Gopas of Gokula. We have a reference to the worship of a cart by Yasodā.[407] So it is clear that people might have respected the cart. Different kinds of carts, driven by oxen, have been represented in the contemporary sculptures of Bharhut,[408] Mathura[409] and Amaravati.[410]

*Travelling on Foot* : The work *pariskaṇḍa* occurs in the *Vrātya* hymn of the *Atharvaveda* and this word denotes the running foot

soldiers one on each side of war chariot.[411] Running foot men were also present in the age of Pāṇini.[412] The *chakra-rakṣā* of the *Mahābhārata*[413] seems to be the same as *pariskaṇḍa* of the Vedic literature. The *chakra-rakṣā* used to run on foot along with chariot. In the age of our Purāṇa also people travelled on foot. We read in the Purāṇa that on the death of his mare in the forest of Mithilā, king Śatadhanva, due to the fear of Kṛṣṇa, fled away on foot. Kṛṣṇa also followed him on foot.[414] The contemporary sculptures[415] also represent many men travelling on foot.

*Draught animals* : Though our Purāṇa refers to many animals,[416] a few were draught animals. Elephants were used for carrying the people from one place to another. Indra has been described in the Purāṇa as travelling on elephant.[417] It is evident from the story of Ṛbhu and Nidāgha that kings also used this animal for travelling purpose.[418] In the contemporary sculptures also, elephants have been depicted as carrying a few persons.[419] Horses were also used for the purpose of conveyance. Our Purāṇa mentions a king travelling on a swift mare.[420] The sculptures of Sanchi and Bharhut, by depicting peoples on horse back,[421] also support the prevalence of travelling on it.

*Air Transport* : There are numerous reference to self-moving celestial air chariots in ancient Indian literature. Its conception can be traced back to the vedic literature.[422] The epics also contain references to air-chairots. Rāma, having achieved his objective in the battle against Rāvaṇa, asked Vibhiṣaṇa to bring quickly the *vimāna* so that he might reach back Ayodhyā in the shortest possibe time as Bharata was anxiously waiting for his return and living a live of austerity and negation.[423] In the *Mahābhārata*, Kṛṣṇa narrated the details of the fight against king Śalva when he attacked Dvārakā with his mighty plane. His plane was as big as a city and very effective in a war against enemies.[424] Arjuna saw thousands of extraordinary planes when he reached Indraloka with Indra's charioteer Mātali.[425] The conception of air chariot is also found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which mentions that Dhruva's mother was stationed on a *vimāna* near polar

star.[426] The Purāṇa also points out that on the death of Kṛṣṇa a celestial air chariot came and the hunter, who had killed Kṛṣṇa, went to heaven.[427] We do not get other details about it in the Purāṇa. A clear self-moving air-chariots can be seen in early Buddhist sculptures.[428]

It is very difficult to say whether the *vimāna* was like modern airoplane or a creation of imagination. It is generally referred to in the mythological stories, so we must not attach much importance to it. It may be suggested that the literary description of *vimāna* might have inspired the imagination of people to depict in sculpture. In the absence of any substantial evidence, it is very difficult to rely on literary evidence. So we may take the *vimāna* as a creation of imagination of ancient people and nothing else.

*Water Transport* : *Boat* : Boat served the purpose of communication in ancient time. For crossing rivers the *Ṛgveda* refers to special type of boats.[429] The epics give a detailed description of several boats which served as the medium of transport. In the *Mahābhārata*, there is a description of the construction of a mechanically propelled boat for safe passage of the Pāṇādavas.[430] The *Rāmāyaṇa* informs us that Rāma, when banished to the forest by his father, crossed the Gaṅgā in a boat and met Bhāradvāja for necessary guidance.[431] Kauṭilya refers to a separate department of navigation and sea-going vessels both for coastal traffic and for larger voyages to foreign countries.[432]

There is no detailed description of boat in our Purāṇa, but it, only at one place, refers to a big boat[433] in the sea. It does not clearly mention the boat as a means of conveyance. But the existence of boat in that age can hardly be questioned. In the sculptures of Bharhut and Sanchi people have been shown as crossing the water in boats.[434] A boat of a peculiar shape has been depicted in Amaravati sculpture.[435] There are also depiction of boats on the coins of Sātavāhana kings.[436]

*Roads* : Roads had played an important part in the economic life of ancient India since the vedic age.[437] In the Jātakas, we find trade

and commerce in a flourishing state and these works clearly testify to an existence of a net work of trade-routes known in those days.[438] Kauṭilya, however, gives better information on the subject. He describes names of the various kinds of roads and highways. He mentions six principal roads in a city, and further enunciates several small roads and foot-paths and frames also rules and regulations regarding traffic. According to him the royal road was to be 4 daṇḍas wide.[439]

Such details about roads are not found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. We do not find any systematic account of roads in the Purāṇa. Some stories of our Purāṇa throw some light on the existence of roads in that age. We are told in a story that Kṛṣṇa went to Soṇitapura from Dvārakā.[440] So this leads us to presume the existence of road connection between the two cities. There might have been a road link between Dvārakā and Kāśi as it is evident from a story that after killing the king of Kāśi, Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā from that place.[441] There was most probably a chariotable road between Dvārakā and Prabhāsa as we read in another story that Kṛṣṇa advised all Yādavas to go Prabhāsa from Dvārakā.[442] All Yādavas, along with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, went to Prabhāsa from Dvārakā by chariots.[443] There was a road link between Hastināpura (in Mereet) and Dvārakā. It is stated that Baladeva reached Hastināpura from Dvārakā.[444] He could not have reached that place in the absence of any road. There is also indirectly reference to the prevalence of a road between Dvārakā and Indraprastha (Indrapat near Delhi). We are informed in the Purāṇa that Arjuna returned to Indraprastha from Dvārakā along with many wives of Kṛṣṇa. He passed through Pañchanada. So a road between Dvārakā and Indraprastha through Pañchanada (i.e. Punjab) might have existed in that age.[445] Mathurā and Gokula were also connected with a chariotable road as it is evident from a story that Akrūra, along with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, went to Mathurā from Gokula by a chariot. Even in modern time there is a motorable road of 27 miles between Mathurā and Gokula. There was a road between Rājagṛha and Mathurā as it is evident from another story that Jarāsandha, the king of Magadha, attacked Mathurā with large army.[446] His army might have followed the land route. This road link between two

towns was also prevalent in the Buddhist age.[447] The *Mahābhārata*[448] is also aware of this road. Mathurā and Avantipura were also linked with a road. We are told in a story that after killing Kaṁsa in Mathurā, Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma went to the residence of Sāndipani at Avantipura from Mathura.[449] Our Purāna shows its acquaintance with two kinds of roads, i.e. *rājamārga*[450] (royal road) and *chatuṣpatha*[451] (crossing of roads).

*Coinage* :

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to different types of coins. Most of them were in use in that period and some could trace their origin to the vedic times. The need for coins of different denominations and metals was to meet the economic pressure.

*Niṣka* : According to some it seems to be a kind of denomination of coinage in ancient India.[452] Its antiquity can be traced in the Vedic age.[453] In later period it also continued. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[454] refers to it in the sense of coin. Scholars[455] have identified *niṣka* with a gold coin. This view is sought to also be corroborated by literary evidences. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* refers to a *niṣka* of gold.[456] More reliable evidence is furnished by the *Kuhuka Jātaka* which refers to a farmer bringing his hundred *niṣka* of gold to an ascetic.[457] The *Mahābhārata* also supports our contention. According to the epic, the unit of wealth was reckoned at *niṣkas* of gold. However, it has to be conceded that it is not clear whether *niṣka* was just a gold piece of some definite weight or shape, or was a coined money duly stamped. Earliest gold coins belong to the Kushāṇa period. Earliest Indian coins are silver or copper punch marked ones.

*Pana* : *Paṇa*, another coin denomination, was prevalent in the society as early as the Vedic age[458] and thereafter.[459] This denomination of coin has also been mentioned by the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[460] The existence of *paṇa* can be corroborated by the epigraphic evidence of Śaka[461] and Sātavāhana[462] dynasties. It should be mentioned here that according to Manu,[463] *karṣāpaṇa* is same as *paṇa*. So the *paṇa* seems to be shorter term of *karṣāpaṇa*. Our Purāṇa is silent over the metal and weight of the coin. But other sources give ample light on this

point. The metal of this coin was not only copper, as mentioned by Manu,[464] but it could also be of silver[465] or black metal (iron or lead).[466] Its value or weight differed according to the nature of the metal (if of gold-16 *māssas*, silver-16 *paṇa*, and copper-80 *rattikās* or 176 grains).[467] The numismatists use this term to denote punch-marked coins.

*Paṇārdhārdhārddha* (one-eighth *paṇa*) : Our Purāṇa[468] refers to another coin denomination as *paṇārdhārdhārddha*. Kauṭilya refers to it as *aṣṭabhāga*, an actual coin related to the *paṇā*.[469] The Jātakas are silent about one-eighth *kahāpana*. Manu mentions it as *padārdha*.[470] Thus it stands for one-eighth *paṇa*.

*Trade* :

The Purāṇa does not throw sufficient light on the topic of trade. It is clear from the Purāṇa[471] that the vaiśyas followed the trade for their livelihood. Other authorities[472] also bear testimony to this fact. In distress the brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas were to follow this profession.[473] The Purāṇa[474] and other texts[475] are against those brāhmaṇas who sell the prohibited articles. So brāhmaṇas were not fit for carrying the trade.

*Articles of Trade* : Our Purāṇa does not give the list of vendible articles but it indirectly refers to the articles which were not to be sold at that time. Many terms such a *vikrayī*,[476] *vikrayika*,[477] *vikretā*,[478] *vikrīṇate*[479] have been used for vendors. The compiler of the Purāṇa is dead against the sale of women.[480] The sale of horse[481] was condemned in the society at that time. Intoxicating drinks were also sold in the market and the *soma* was used in the society. The position of the vendor of wine was very low in the society as our text prescribes a hell[482] for him. The vendors of wine were also not invited in the *śrāddha* ceremony.[483] Other authorities[484] also prohibits the sale of wine. Other vendible articles are *lakṣa* (lac), *mānsa* (meat), *rasanā* (liquid), *tila*, *lavaṇa* (salt) but they were not to be sold by brāhmaṇas.[485] So we can suggest that these articles might have been sold in the market. Articles of perfumery (*gandha*) and garland (*mālā*) might have been sold in society. We are informed that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma asked a garland-maker for garlands.[486] We do not get reference to the

sale of ornaments. The existence of different kinds of ornaments[487] in the society leads us to presume that ornaments were probably made to order. The Purāṇa acquaints us with several kinds of economic products such as cloth (*vastra*) clothing like *śāṭya*, deer-skins (*ajina*), leather goods as shoes, arms and weapons like sword (*asi*), *paraśu*, *triśūla, parigha, tomara*, bow, arrow, *śakti*, plough-share; food stuffs like *guḍa, phaṇita*, milk (*kṣīra*), curds (*dadhi*), vegetables (*śāka*), cereals and pulses; utensils and pottery; intoxicating drinks like *surā, soma, madya*; gold and silver ornaments like *kuṇḍala, mukuṭa, valaya*; gems like *vaidūrya, maṇi*; metals as gold (*suvarṇa*), silver (*rajata*); musical instruments like lute (*vīṇā*), *paṭaha, gomukha* and miscellaneous objects like garland (*mālā*), perfumery, etc.

*Fauna* :

The study of fauna is an important chapter in the general history of Indian animals which still remains to be discussed. Several attempts have been made to classify the animals since the vedic period. A few words such as *ubhayatodanta* and *anyatodanta, dvīpada* and *chatuṣpada*, etc., of vedic literature[488] clearly show that the vedic people were well acquainted with the classification of fauna-kingdom. Pāṇini classifies creation into animate[489] and inanimate.[490] The animal world is further sub-divided into human[491] and animal[492] kingdom and the latter is again divided on the basis of their habits into domestic[493] and wild.[494] The great Grammarian also gives ample light on the animal kingdom.[495] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* throws ample light on the fauna-kingdom. It distinguishes this kingdom into two groups,[496] domestic, *i.e.*, village (*grāmyānpāśūn*) and wild, *i.e.*, forest (*āraṇya*). The domestic class,[497] (i.e. village animals) contains the cow, goat, hog, sheep, horse, ass, and mule. The second class (i.e., wild animals) is consisted of seven groups[498] of animals and they are : (*i*) *śrvāpada* (like tiger, etc.), (*ii*) *dvikhurā* (animals with cloven hoofs), (*iii*) *hastī* (elephant), (*iv*) *vānara* (monkey), (*v*) *pakṣi* (birds), (*vi*) *audakāḥ* (acquatic animals), (*vii*) *sarisṛpa* (reptiles and insects). This shows the wide knowledge of the classification of the animal-kingdom in the age of the Purāṇa under consideration.

Our Purāṇa show its acquaintance with different kinds of animals. An elephant was used for conveyance[499] and it also formed a part of an army.[500] The camel[501] is another animal and the milk of she-camel was not used in the sacrifice.[502] Horse was used to carry the load and to draw chariots[503] also. It also formed a part of the royal army.[504] The reference to the horses of Kamboja-desa[505] in the Purāṇa clearly shows that horses were imported to India from Kamboja. Other sources[506] also attest to the import of horses from foreign countries. But the sale of horses was highly condemned in the society. An ass, called *asabha*,[507] *gardabha*,[508] was also a domestic animal.[509] The goat[510] was also regarded as another domestic animal and whose flesh was considered as sacred for the *śrāddha* ceremony.[511] The Purāṇa is dead against the taming of this animal[512] The sheep was another domestic animal[513] and its flesh was used in the sacrifice.[514] But the taming of this animal was also condemned[515] in the society. The deer[516] was another domestic animal and its flesh was considered as sacred in the sacrifice.[517] It was tamed[518] by people in the society for enjoyment. The hog, also a domestic animal,[519] has been mentioned as *sūkara*. The village-hog was considered as very impure in society.[520] The Purāṇa is also acquainted with *mahiṣa*[521] (buffalo) and its milk was forbidden in the *śrāddha* rituals.

Other animals, as referred to in the Purāṇa,[522] are *śaśa* (hare), *nakula* (mongoose), *gavaya* (gayal), *khadga* (rhinoceros), *śvānā*[523] (dog), *vyāghra*[524] (tiger), *siṁha*[525] (lion), *śiva*[526] (jackal), *śṛgāla*[527] (fox), *mārjāra*[528] (cat) and *vānara*[529] (monkey).

*Acquatic Creatures* : The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* shows its acquaintance with many acquatic creatures which are crocodile (*makara*),[530] fish (*matsyā*),[531] *sapharya*, tortoise (*kūrma*),[532] swan (*haṁsa*)[533] and du (*karaṇdava*).[534]

*Birds* : The word *paksi*[535] has been used for bird in our Purāṇa and it refers to following birds : vulture (*gṛdha*),[536] crane (*balāka*),[537] peacock[538] (*mayūra*), *śikhi*, *sāraṅga*, crow (kāka),[539] parrots (*śuki*),[540] hawker falcon (śyeni),[541] owls,[542] cocks (*kukkuta*,[543] *kṛkavāku*[544]).

Some other creatures of animal kingdom, mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* are lizard (*śisumāra*),[545] snake (*ahi*).[546] The Purāṇa[547] refers to many kinds of serpent such as *śeṣa, vāsuki, taksaka, śaṅkha-śveta, mahāpadma, kambala, aśvatara, elāputra, nāga, karkoṭaka, dhanañjaya.* It is difficult to say anything about their characteristics, but according to the Purāna, they are poisonous snakes.

*Flora* :

Our Purāṇa furnishes an important chapter in the general history of Indian plants. It refers to the forests, groves of trees, plants, flowers, leaves, fruits, and roots. It is also acquainted with the principal trees of India.

*Forests* : The Purāna uses the terms *vana, āraṇya* in the sense of forest.[548] The Naimisārṇya[549] (modern Nimsar in U.P.) the forest of Mithilā (Mithilāvana),[550] tālavana[551] (forest of palm tree near Gokula), madhuvana[552] are important forests referred to in the Purāṇa.

We may note down here that in ancient India a conscious attempt was made to prevent whole-sale destruction of forests and of the wild flora and fauna. Budbha and Mahāvīra issued ordinance for the protection of plant life as much as animal life.[553] Kautilya[554] is also in favour of the protection of forests. Aśoka promulgated an edict that forest must not be burnt either uselessly or in order to destroy living beings.[555] Probably an echo of Buddha's ordinance not to set woods on fire was issued for the guidance of the *bhikhus* upon a complaint from the people.[556] The *Manu Smṛti*[557] is also against the cutting of green trees. In the *Mahābhārata* it is laid down that to cut down a tree of the forest is a sin [558] and setting fire to woods as well as to *āśramas,* village and towns is classed as equal to the sin of brahmanicide.[559]

It is interesting to note down that the *Viṣṇu Purāna* is also dead against the cutting of a forest. It prescribes a hell for those people who destroy the forest.[560] The main idea behind this provision is only to protect the forest-wealth. From economic point of view forest must have been very useful.

*Plants* : It is profitable to discuss here the plant-kingdom as found in our text. During that time people had great regard for plants and trees so the Purānakāra associates the origin of plants with Brahmā. The Purāna[561] says that "whilst from the hair of His (Brahmā) body sprang herbs, fruits and roots."

The Purāṇa under review refers to the different parts of a tree,[562] such as *vīja* (seed), *mūla* (root), *skandha* (stem), *śākhā* (branch), *vrīhivīja* (seed of rice) and *kānda* (stem). Some of these parts are mentioned by other authorities. Pānini mentions all these parts in different *sūtras* and in his view the plants were named after the peculiarity of their leaves, flowers, fruits and roots.[563] Patañjali speaks of a tree as consisting of roots, trunk, fruits and leaves.[564]

*Trees* : Our Purāna refers to several trees. We read in the Purāna that *plākṣa* (Ficus Infectoria) was appointed by Supreme God as a sovereign of trees.[565] The Plākṣadvipa was named after this tree.[566] *Nyagrodha*[567] or *vaṭa*[568] (Ficus Bengalensis) is another tree which is very long. It is stated that *nyagrodha* is an abode of Brahmā in the Puṣkaradvīpa.[569] *Śamī* (Prosopis Specigera) is mentioned as growing in the kali age.[570] It is generally found in the arid dry zones of the Punjab, Sindh and Rajaputana.[571] A small tree was called *samīra*. A long tree of *kadamba* (Nauclea) is mentioned in our Purāna.[572] Its flowers were used in the garland.[573] *Jambu* (Eugenia Jambolana), another tree is found in the Jambudvīpa. This island was named after *jambu* tree.[574] *Pippala*, another big sacred tree, is mentioned in our Purāna.[575] It is stated in the Purāna that the Śālmaladvīpa was named after *śālmali* (Bombax Malabaricum) tree.[576] It is silk-cotton tree. *Tāla* (Borassus Flabelliformis) is another tree. We read in the Purāna that Kṛṣṇa killed Dhenukāsura in the forest of *tāla*.[577] This forest also served the purpose of the grazing the cattle of *gopa*.

It is mentioned in the Purāna that in the Kali age people will use the cloth made of *śāṇī* (*śāṇīprāyāni vastrāni*).[578] It is called *sana* in Hindī. It is a plant from the fibres of which a coarse cloth is prepared.

*Flowers* : Our Purāṇa gives the information regarding the

different parts of a flower,[579] such as *nāla* (culm), *patra* (leaf), *aṁkura* (shoot), *kośa* (bud), *puṣpa* (flower), *kṣīra* (milk of fluid in the flower), *taṇḍula* (grain of the flower), *tuṣa* (chaff), *kaṇa* (small particles of the flower).

The Purāṇa further mentions several flowers. *Kumuda*,[580] an important flower in our Purāṇa, is water lily. *Kunda*[581] is another flower which has been mentioned as white in colour. *Jati*[582] may be taken as *chamelī* in Hindi. In our Purāṇa, many words such as *saroja*, *padma*, *paṁkaja*, *utapala*, *kamala*, *ambuja*, have been used for lotus flower.[583] The text knows the blue-lotus[584] also.

*Fruits* : Pānini takes fruits as the produce of trees.[585] But Kātyāyana and Patañjali take *phala* in wider sense and include in it even grains as rice, barley, pulses, sesamum, etc., produced by the annual plants which wither away after ripening.[586] Our text does not define the *phala* but refers to some fruits such as *jambu*,[587] *nārikela*[588] (coconut), *tāla phala*[589] (palm-fruit). Some of these, fruits and flowers have been depicted in the contemporary sculptures.[590]

We have discussed practically all aspects of economic life in detail, the professions of the artisan, *kulala*, *vardhakin*, rajaka, with their separate functions; workers in metal, masons and architects; domestic servants, cooks, and certain low professions like those of the fowler and the fisherman. We have found that a few professions have been highly eulogised, and some have been criticised by our Purāṇa. We have also seen that the professions, followed by backward and low class of people, were not respected in the society. The subject relating to agriculture and husbandry is considered in detail with reference to the division of holdings, methods of agricultural operations, agricultural weapons. In this connection we have also mentioned different crops. We do not find any new innovation in agriculture in the age of our Purāṇa. The animal husbandry and the profession of cattle-rearing were closely associated with land; and cows, sheep and other animals were reared. Materials on trade and commerce are very meagre. We have considered articles of trade as noticed in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. A few types of coins, as furnished by the Purāṇa, have been

mentioned here. We have referred to means of communication. The flora and fauna have also been discussed which are, from the economic point of view, very useful for people. Thus the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* presents a fully developed and completely mature economic life of its own period.

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220. *Ibid.*, V. 242.
221. *Viṣ. P.* V. 5.22.
222. *Ibid.*, III. 11.109.
223. *Ibid.*, III. 11.81.
224. *Ibid.*, II. 13.93, 95.
225. *Ibid.*, VI. 5.46.
226. *Ep. Ind.* X. p. 111.
227. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 234.
228. *Jat.* I. 247; II. 59; III. 224, 281.
229. *Jāt* I. 247; II. 59, 241; III. 224.
230. *Viṣ, P.* II. 6.16.
231. *Ibid.*
232. *Ibid.*, II. 6.16.
233. *Dham.* 80, 33.
234. *Therigāthā*, 19, 877.
235. *Jāt.* VI. 66.
236. *Ved. Ind.* I, p. 171.
237. *Jāt.* III. 368, 376, 385.
238. *Mbh.* I. ı85.6.
239. *Mbh.* XI. 3. 12-13.
240. *Viṣ. P.* II. 8. 27.
241. *Ibid.*, II. 6. 25.
242. *Ibid.*
243. *Ibid.*, V. 6. 2.
244. *Ibid.*
245. *Ibid.*, V. 38. 41.
246. *Jāt.* III. 368, 376, 385.
247. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 13. 34, 43.
248. Ray, N.R., *MSA* figs. 27, 34, 35, 36.
249. *Supra*, ch. II.
250. *Viṣ. P.* III. 13. 5.
251. *HS.*, pp. 161 ff.
252. *Mbh.* XII. 57. 45; V. 33.80; *Manu.* IV. 253; *Gaut.* XVII. 6.
253. *Aṣṭa*, III. 1. 145; *Maj. Nīk.* I. 36; *Aṅg. Nīk.* III. 230; *Jāt.* IV. 8.
254. *Viṣ. P.* V. 19. 14, 15.
255. *Ibid.*
256. *Mil. Pañh*, 331; *Rāmā.* II. 83. 15.
257. *Mbh.* XII. 91. 2.
258. *Arth.* IV. 1.
259. *Yāj.* II. 48.
260. *Manu.* IV. 219.
261. *Jāt.* VI. 427.
262. *Mbh.* XII. 86. 16; XV. 85. 11.
263. *Viṣ. P.* I. 17. 9.
264. *Ibid.*, V. 23. 13-14.
265. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pl. XXVIII.
266. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 2. 100.
267. *Ibid.*, I. 19. 10.
268. *Ibid.*, IV. 13. 43, 44.
269. *Ibid.*, V. 20. 4, 5.
270. *Mbh.* IV. 9. 18.
271. *Jāt.* III. 49.
272. *Mil. Pañh.*p. 331.
273. *Arth.* IV. 8.
274. *Mbh.* IV. 8. 2; VII. 139. 99.
275. *Viṣ. P.* I. 18. 1, 2, 7; V. 27. 7.
276. *Ibid.*
277. *Mbh.* XII. 48. 26.
278. *Ibid.*, XII. 36. 2.
279. *Ibid.*, XII. 29. 5.

280. *Rāmā*. II. 8. 30.
281. *Viṣ. P.* III. 12. 38.
282. *Nār. S.* I. 186; XIV. 27; *Manu.* X. 36, 49.
283. *Viṣṇu. S.* LI. 8.
284. *Mbh.* XII. 217. 36.
285. *Rāmā*. II. 80. 1.
286. On *Pān*. I. 1. 45.
287. *supra*, ch. II.
288. *Manu*. VIII. 397.
289. *Nār. S.* XIV. 27.
290. *Pān*. III. 1. 100; VI. 2. 70.
291. *Arth*. II. 25.
292. *Mbh*. III. 23. 14; XIII. 9. 7; 23. 102.
293. *Ibid*., XII. 78. 4.
294. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6. 22; III. 15. 5.
295. *Ibid*., II. 6. 22.
296. *Ibid*., III. 15. 5.
297. *supra*, ch. II.
298. *I. Pān*. p. 119.
299. *Jāt*. V. 12.
300. *Ibid*., IV. 161.
301. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15. 6.
302. *Ibid*., II. 6. 22.
303. *Ibid.*
304. q. Wilson, *Viṣ. P.* (tr.) 1840, p. 209, fn. 7.
305. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6. 22.
306. *Ibid*., II. 6. 21.
307. *Ibid.*
308. *Ibid*., V. 6. 46.
309. *Ibid*., I. 9. 104.
310. *Ibid*., V. 19. 17, 18, 23, 24.
311. *Digh. Nīk*. II. 14; *Maj. Nīk*. I 387; *Mil. Pañh*, p. 331.
312. *Mbh*. II. 21. 16; V. 34. 18; XII. 71. 20.
313. *Jāt*. VI. 335.
314. *Jāt*. II. 181; III. 160, 512; IV. 156
315. *Ibid*., VI. 336.
316. *MV*. VI. II. 2; *Maj. Nīk*. III. 6-7; Singh, *LNEI*. pp. 224 f.
317. *Mbh*. VII. 279. 14 f; 299. 14.
318. *Rāmā*. II. 83. 12. ff.
319. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11. 21, 115; V. 20. 1.
320. *Sel. Ins.* p. 203.
321. *Ibid.*
322. *IC*. XII, p. 84.
323. *Ep. Ind.* I. p. 385; II. p. 203.
324. *Ved. Ind.* I. p. 218.
325. *Jāt*. II. 16, 29; V. 154.
326. *Mbh*. II. 5. 52.
327. *Ibid*., XIII. 90. 11.
328. *Mbh*. II. 5. 42.
329. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6. 18.
330. *Ibid.*
331. *Manu*. III. 162.
332. *Ibid*., VI. 50.
333. *Ved. Ind.* II. pp. 104-105.
334. *ABORI*, XIX, p. 143.
335. *JOI*. XII (1962), 66.
336. *Mbh*. XII. 28. 45; 69. 59.
337. *Ibid*., XIII. 90. 14.
338. *Ibid*., XII. 28. 45, 47.
339. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 98.
340. *Ibid*., I. 6. 21. ff.
341. *Ibid*., VI. 5. 2. ff.
342. *Ibid*., IV. 5. 13.
343. *Rāmā*. II. 66. 14.
344. *Vis. P.* VI. 5. 48,
345. *Ibid*., II. 12. 27.
346. *Ibid.*
347. *Mbh*. XIII. 90. 7; XII. 174. 25.
348. *Ibid*., XII. 174. 25.
349. *Manu*. III. 158.
350. q. Bose A.N., *SRENI*, p. 252.
351. *Jāt*. V. p. 424; *Mil Panh*. 331. *Rāmā*, II. 83. 15; *Arth*. II. 12.
352. *Vis. P.* I. 15. 120.
353. *supra*, ch. II.

354. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 103.
355. *Ibid.*, IV. 4. 48.
356. *LNEI.* pp. 222-223.
357. *Maj. Nīk.* II. 17: III. 121.
358. *I. Pāṇ.* p. 231.
359. *Arth.* II. 11.
360. *Viṣ. P.* V. 3. 34.
361. *Ibid.*
362. *Ibid.*, II. 5. 15.
363. *Ibid.*, V. 3. 34.
364. *Ved. Ind.* II. pp. 172 f.
365. *Jāt.* II. 200; III. 184-185; *Mbh.* V. 35. 44; XII. 147. 10.
366. *supra*, ch. II.
367. *Viṣ. P.* V. 37, 14, 73.
368. *Ibid.*, V. 37. 69, 70.
369. *Ibid.*, II. 6.26.
370. *Manu.* X. 48-49.
371. *supra*, ch. II.
372. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6. 26.
373. *Ibid.*, II. 6.22.
374. *Jāt.* I. 208.
375. *Mbh.* XII. 138.23.
376. *Ibid.*, XII. 147.10.
377. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.22.
378. *Ibid.*, V. 27.6.
379. *Ibid.*
380. *Ibid.*, II. 6.22.
381. *Jāt.* I. 234.
382. *Ibid.*, I. 427.482.
383. *Mbh.* V. 34.66.
384. *Ibid.*, V. 34.13.
385. *Viṣ. P.* II. 13.55.
386. *Viṣ. P.* II. 13.15.
387. *Ibid.*, II. 13.58, 60.
388. *Ibid.*, II. 13.53 ff.
389. *Ibid.*, II. 13.93, 95.
390. *Rāmā. Kis. K.* 25.20, 21.
391. S.R. Murti Amaravati Sculpture in Madras Museum, pl. X. 20-11 (Madras 1942); cf. Motichanda, *Sārthavāha*, p. 238, Fig. 32, 33.
392. *Ved. Ind.* II. pp. 201-203, 488.
393. *Jāt.* VI. 503; *Rāmā.* II. 71; 83.1,3.
394. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 13.92: VI. 6.20.
395. *Ibid.*, IV. 13.72; V. 1.6
396. *Ibid.*, II. 12.1 ff.
397. *Ibid.*, II. 12.17.
398. *Ibid.*, II. 8.2-3.
399. *Ibid.*, II. 8.7.
400. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. VIII, Fig. 1.
401. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, p. 124.
402. *Viṣ. P.* V. 5.1; 6.2.
403. *Ved. Ind.* II. 0.345.
404. *Nir.* VI. 22; *Chh. Up.* IV. 1.8.
405. *Aṣṭā* IV. 4.80; cf. *I. Pāṇ*, pp. 151f.
406. *Viṣ. P.* V. 5.2, 4, 5.
407. *Ibid.*, V. 1.2.
408. *Vis. P.* V. 6.7.
409. Barua, *Bharhut*, pl. XLV, LXIX. 86.
410. *JSM*, pl. XX; *Sarthavaha*, pp. 237, Fig. 29.
411. S. R. Murti, *op. cit.*, pl. X. 19.
412. *Ved. Ind*, I. p. 497.
413. *I. Pāṇ.* p. 151.
414. *Mbh. Bhiṣma.* 18.16.
415. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 13.91-96.
416. Maisey, *Sanchi*, pl. XXVII; Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pl. XLVI.
417. See *infra*.
418. *Vis. P.* 1.9.7.
419. *Viṣ. P.* II. 16.7.
420. Marshall, *M. Sanchi*, II, pl. 44.
421. *Vis. P.* IV. 13.91.
422. Cunningham, *Bharhut* (1962), pl. XII; Maisey, *Sanchi*, pls. XV. 14, 15.
423. *ṚV.* I. 34; I. 118; I. 183.
424. *Rāmā. Yuddha* K.

425. *Mbh. Van.* ch. 14.
426. *Ibid.*, ch. 42.
427. *Viṣ. P.* I. 12.94.
428. *Viṣ. P.* V. 37.74.
429. Maisey, *Sanchi.* pl. VII. 2; XII. 1.
430. *CHI.* I. p. 101.
431. *Mbh. Jātugṛha*, ch. 140.
432. *Rāmā. Ay. K.*
433. *Arth.* II. 28.
434. *Viṣ. P.* I. 4.46
435. Coomarswamy, *LSB.* XLVIII. 3; Barua, *Bharhut*, I. pl. LX. 14.
436. Motichandra, *op. cit.*, Fig. 12.
437, *Ibid.*, p. 233, Fig. 2.
438. *VA.* p. 399.
439. *CHI*, I. p. 213; *SONEI.* pp. 272 ff.
440. *Arth.* II. 4
441. *Viṣ. P.* V. 33.52.
442. *Viṣ. P.* V. 34.27.
443. *Ibid.*, V. 37.30.
444. *Ibid.*, V. 37.38.
445. *Ibid.*, V. 38.8.
446. *Ibid.*, V. 38.34.
447. *Ibid.*, V. 22.2-3.
448. Motichanda, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
449. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
450. *Viṣ. P.* V. 21. 18-19.
451. *Ibid.*, V. 19. 12; 20.1.
452. *Ibid.*, III. 11. 140.
453. Bkandarkar, *AIN.* p. 55.
454. *Ved. Ind.* I. p. 455.
455. *Viṣ. P.* V. 28. 13-14.
456. Bhandarkar, *op.cit.*, p. 60.
457. *Sat. Br.* XI. 4.1.8.
458. *Jāt.* I. 375 ff.
459. *Mbh. Droṇa*, 67.10; *Virāṭa*, 36.39; 21.10.
460. *Samavidhāna. Br.* III. 7.9.
461. *Aṣṭā.* V. 1.27, 29, 34.
462. *Viṣ. P.* V. 28. 13, 4.
463. *Sel. Ins.*, pp. 157-58; Senart, *Ep. Ind.* VII, pp. 82 ff.
464. *ASWI.* V. pp. 60 f.
465. *Manu.* VIII. 136.
466. *Ibid.*
467. *Maj. Nīk.* II. 163; *Aṅg. Nik.* I. 250.
468. Dham. Commentary (P.T.S.), III. 254.
469. Monier William, *Dic.*, p. 276.
470. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 1.22.
471. *Arth.* II. 12.
472. *Manu.* VIII. 404.
473. *Viṣ. P.* III. 8.30.
474. *Atri. S.* 15; *Harita S.* 2.6.
475. *Viṣ P.* III. 8.39.
476. *Ibid.*, II. 6.19.
477. *Manu.* X. 82; *Yāj.* II. 36-38.
478. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.11; III. 15.5.
479. *Ibid.*, II. 6.13.
480. *Ibid.*, II. 6.19.
481. *Ibid.*, II. 6.22.
482. *Ibid.*, II. 6.11.
483. *Ibid.*
484. *Ibid.*, II. 6.22.
485. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.5.
486. *Manu.* XI. 62; *Yāj.* III. 265.
487. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.19.
488. *Ibid.*, V. 19.18 ff.
489. *supra*, ch. II.
490. *Ved. Ind*, I. p. 50.
491. *Pāṇ.* IV. 3. 135.
492. *Ibid.*, II. 4.6.
493. *Ibid.*, IV. 2. 134.
494. *Ibid.*, III. 3.69.
495. *Ibid.*, I. 2. 73.
496. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.129.
497. *I. Pāṇ.* pp. 218 ff.
498. *Viṣ. P.* I. 5.62.
499. *Ibid.*
500. *Ibid.*, I. 5.53.

501. *Ibid.*, 1.9.7, 75.
502. *Ibid.*, V. 29.32.
503. *Ibid.*, I. 5.17; 21.17.
504. *Ibid.*, III. 16.11.
505. *Ibid.*, IV. 13.92.
506. *Ibid.*, IV. 12.15; V. 29.32.
507. *Ibid.*, V. 29.32.
508. *Arth.* II. 30.
509. *Viṣ. P.* I. 5.49; VI. 3.33.
510. *Ibid.*, I. 5.52.
511. *Ibid.*
512. *Ibid.*, I. 5.48, 52; II. 6.20.
513. *Ibid.*, III. 16.1.
514. *Ibid.*, II. 6.20.
515. *Ibid.*, I. 5.52.
516. *Ibid.*, III. 16.2.
517. *Ibid.*, II. 6.20.
518. *Ibid.*, I. 5.48; III. 16.1.
519. *Ibid.*, III. 16.1.
520. *Ibid.*, II. 1.16 ff.
521. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.21.
522. *Ibid.*, III. 16.12.
523. *Ibid.*, II. 16.11.
524. *Ibid.*, III. 16.1, 3.
525. *Ibid.*, III. 16.12.
526. *Ibid.*, I. 22.8.
527. *Ibid.*, I. 12.8; 22.7.
528. *Ibid.*, I. 12.26.
529. *Ibid.*, III. 18.71, 72.
530. *Ibid.*, II. 6.21.
531. *Ibid.*, III. 16.12.
532. *Ibid.*, I. 12.28.
533. *Ibid.*, III. 16. 1; V. 27.5.
534. *Ibid.*, II. 3.23.
535. *Ibid.*, IV. 2.97.
536. *Ibid.*, I. 21.15.
537. *Ibid.*, I. 5. 53.
538. *Ibid.*, III. 18.78.
539. *Ibid.*, V. 6.41.
540. *Ibid.*, III. 18.82; VI. 3.34.
541. *Ibid.*, III. 18.80.
542. *Ibid.*, I. 21.15.
543. *Ibid.*, I. 21.16.
544. *Ibid.*, I. 21.15.
545. *Ibid.*, II. 6.21.
546. *Ibid.*, III. 16.12.
547. *Viṣ. P.* II. 9.1
548. *Ibid.*, I. 5.44.
549. *Ibid.*, I. 21.20-21.
550. *Ibid.*, IV. 13.93 (*Vana*); I. 6.23; (*Āraṇya*).
551. *Ibid.*, III. 14.18.
552. *Ibid.*, IV. 13.93.
553. *Ibid.*, V. 8.1, 2, 3.
654. *Ibid.*, I. 12.3.
555. *MV.* III. 1-3; Jacobi, *Jaina Sutras*, II. p. 357.
556. *Arth.* II. 2; IV. 11.
557. *PE.* V.
558. *Chulla-vagga*, V. II. 32.I.
559. *Manu.* XI. 65.
560. *Mbh.* XII. 32. 14; 36.34.
561. *Ibid.*, XIII. 24.12.
562. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.24.
563. *Ibid.*, II. 7.32, 38.
564. *Ibid.*, I. 5.50.
565. *Pāṇ.* IV. 1.64.
566. *Mahā.* I. 219.
567. *Viṣ. P.* I. 22.9.
568. *Ibid.*, II. 4.18.
569. *Ibid.*, II. 4.85.
570. *Ibid.*, V. 9.2, 15.
571. *Ibid.*, II. 4.86.
572. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.53.
573. Watt's *Dic.* vol. VI, pt. I. p. 340.
574. *Viṣ. P.* V. 25.4.
575. *Ibid.*, V. 6.46.
576. *Ibid.*, 2.17-20.
577. *Ibid.*, II. 2.17.
578. *Ibid.*, II. 4.33.

579. *Viṣ. P.* V. 8.1. ff.
580. *Ibid.*, VI. 1.53.
581. *Ibid.*, II. 7.38-39.
582. *Ibid.*, V. 2.37; 10.6.
583. *Ibid.*, II. 12. 1; V. 17.24; VI. 1.3.34.
584. *Ibid.*, VI. 3.34.
585. *Ibid.*, V. 10.1 (*saroja*); I. 9.118. (*padma*); I.9.104 (*pamkaja*); I. 9.100 (*kamala*); V. 34.16 (*ambuja*); VI. 3.32 (*utpala*).
586. *Ibid.*, VI. 3.32.
587. *Pāṇ.* IV. 3. 163-167.
588. *Pat.* II. 237.
589. *Viṣ. P.* II. 2.19.
590. *Ibid.*, I. 2.60.
591. *Ibid.*, V. 8.5.
592. Cunningham, *Bharhut* (1962), pp. 45 ff.

Chapter V

# Religious Life

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* throws ample light on different aspects of the religious life of its age. The vedic sacrifices were still performed in society. The Viṣṇu-Vāsudeva cult, which had been originated earlier, became very popular among people. The conception of polytheism can be marked in our Purāṇa, and it also refers to the prevalence of some heretics. The ideas of hell and heaven, as many other religious activities can be marked in the Purāṇa under consideration.

*Relation Among Different Religious Sects* :

With this short introduction, we shall now see the relation among the different religious sects of that age. The Purāṇa clearly shows that Hinduism and heretical sects were not living in harmony. The *Nagnas* and *Pāṣaṇḍas*, deniers of brahmanical religion, always criticised *varṇāśrama dharma*, sacrifices[1] and even the brāhmaṇas.[2] They did not believe in God,[3] and disrespected the vedas.[4] They cared little for *homa, japa*, etc. So it becomes clear that they were dead against Brahmanism. The Purāṇakāra[5] does not seem to be an idle spectator, but he counter-acts these criticisms. He advises the people not to keep contact with the *Nagnas* and the *Pāṣaṇḍas*. Thus we find the controversies among the rival movements as reflected in our Purāṇa. There is no doubt that there was considerable bitterness among the followers of the different religious doctrines, but there is no evidence to show that they suffered from persecution. It is evident from other contemporary evidences that the relation among the followers of different sects was fairly cordial in our period. We know that king Dāmodara Varman[6] of the Ānanda dynasty (A.D. c.

375) was a Buddhist and yet he believed in the efficacy of Hiraṇyagarbha ceremony of the neo-Hinduism of the Purāṇas. A brāhmaṇa named Nāthaśarmā was a pious Hindu, but he issued a land-grant for the proper worship of Jain Arhats.[7] King Śāntamūla of the Ikṣvāku family, was an enthusiastic follower of the Vedic religion, but some members of his family were Buddhists.[8] In the Kadamba family, kings Kṛṣṇa-Varman and Mṛgeśa-Varman, who were followers of the Vedic religion, made grant to a Jain establishment out of their reverence of Mahāvīra.[9]

It is further clear from our Purāṇa that different sects of Hinduism lived in perfect accord. During its earlier career, the *Bhāgavata* religion or *Pañcharātra* was against Vedic sacrifices.[10] But in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* such opposition between Bhāgavatism and Vedic religion is not found, and it refers to different Vedic gods and goddesses. Furthermore, the Vedic gods, as we shall see later on, do not hold the supreme position in our Purāṇa. Vāsudeva or Kṛṣna has been regarded as a supreme god and he is identified with Viṣṇu. Indra, Śiva and many other Vedic gods have been represented in the Purāṇa as holding inferior position in comparison to Kṛṣṇa. We find clear references in the Purāṇa to the rivalry between Kṛṣna and Indra,[11] but their relation was cordial. We are also told that after unsuccessful attempt to destroy Gokula through pouring rain, Indra came to coronate Kṛṣna.[12] Kṛṣṇa has also been represented as fighting against Śiva, but the latter was defeated.[13] However, as a rule Kṛṣṇa does not appear as a rival of Śiva. The cordial relation between the two gods can also be marked in the Purāṇa, where at one place Kṛṣṇa says to Śiva, "Since you Śaṁkara, have given a boon unto Bāṇa, let him live, from respect to your promises, my discus is arrested; the assurance of safety granted by you is granted also by me. You are fit to apprehend that you are not distinct from me. That which I am, thou art; and that also is this world, with its gods, demons, and mankind. Men contemplate distinctions, because they are stupified by ignorance."[14] We have got other contemporary evidences to show that there was a complete harmony among the followers of the Vedic, the Bhāgavata and the Śaiva sects by the early part of the fourth century A.D. We know that Vaiṣṇava kings

like Samudra Gupta performed the Vedic Aśvamedha sacrifice.[15] In the third century A.D. there was a ruler named Rājamitra, who performed a number of Vedic sacrifices and marked their conclusion by donation for a Śaiva temple.[16] This might have been possible because of mutual adjustment and accommodation.

*Vedic Religion* :

Vedic religion was very simple in early period, but later on it was elaborated. In the age of the Brāhmaṇas, the pantheon appeared to be still enlarged. A number of spirits, goblin, demons and allegorical personification were the objects of worship. Vedic sacrifices became complex and elaborated. The priests held an important position in the performance of the sacrifices. In the age of the Gṛhya Sūtra literature[17] the details and the complications of sacrifices reached their apex.

In the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., India witnessed the rise of new religious movements against the brahmanical doctrines. Mahāvīra and Gautama Buddha were two exponents of the heretical doctrines. Jainism and Buddhism became in every way detrimental to the interests of Brahmanism. The Buddhists, especially those who entered the *saṁgha*, practised *ahiṁsā*, did not recognise the vedas and brāhmaṇas, ignored the vedic gods, cared little for the *varṇāśrama dharma*. Even upto the Mauryan age, Jainism and Buddhism dominated in the society. A set-back occurred in the performances of Vedic sacrifices during the time of Aśoka. He had discouraged the sacrifices of animals.[18] But the rise of the Śuṅgas, under the leadership of Senāpati Puṣyamitra, gave a blow to heretics. The sacrifices and the brahmanical religion were revived with a great enthusiasm by him. The *Mahābhārata* and the *Manu Smṛti* (being works of B.C. c. 200) also made a determined effort to defend the Vedic sacrifices. The *Mimāṁsā Sūtra* of Jaimini was also composed at about the same period to expand and defend the same cause. Hence, Altekar rightly opines that down to A.D. c. 400 the Vedic religion was fairly popular in society.[19]

Our Purāṇa, being finally redacted in the same period, also appears to defend the cause of the vedic religion. It refers to the performance of several vedic sacrifices, and contains references to accessories needed in sacrifices, the priests, *dakṣiṇā*, etc. But materials regarding the sacrifices, as mentioned in our Purāṇa, are not exhaustive as we find in other ancient texts.[20]

*Types of the Vedic Sacrifices* : Several Vedic sacrifices, such as *Agniṣṭoma*, *Rājasūya*, *Aśvamedha*, have been mentioned in the Purāṇa under review, but it does not throw ample light on the features of these sacrifices. *Agniṣṭoma*,[21] a sacrifice mentioned in the Purāṇa, was prevalent even in the Vedic age.[22] As the simplest and the most common of Soma-sacrifice, it required the immolation of sangle goat, a he-goat to Agni and the chanting of twelve *stotras*, viz., *bahiṣ-pavamāna* and four *ājya-stotras* at the morning sacrifice; the *mādhyamdinapavamāna* and four *pṛṣṭha stotras* at the mid-day service; the *tritīya* or *ārbhava-pavamāna* and *agniṣṭoma-sāman* at the evening service. The last named chant is often explained as the *Agniṣṭoma—saṁsthas kratuḥ* or the sacrifice concluding with Agni's praise.[23] Keith has raised doubt on the views expressed by Hillebrandt, that it was the spring festival, celebrated at the new or full-moon, which marked the beginning of the year, when a nectar of the gods was offered to them in the shape of king Soma.[24] It would be out of place to describe the details[25] of this Vedic ritual.

The *Rājasūya* sacrifice, whose antiquity goes back to the vedic age,[26] was performed at the time of coronation of a new king. *Abhiṣechanīya*, as the name of a rite included in the *Rājasūya*, is mentioned in the white *Yajurveda*, as well as in several Brāhmaṇas and the Śrauta ritual of all the four Vedas. The last book of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* has consecration ceremony itself for its main topic. This sacrifice is also mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which refers to the *Rājasūya* sacrifice performed by Chandramā; but details are lacking in our Purāṇa. The details of the inauguration ceremony have been recorded in many ancient Sanskrit texts[27] but their description may be out of place to discuss here. The prevalence of *Rājasūya*

sacrifice can be supported by the evidence of the *Mahābhāsya*.[28] The Nana ghat cave inscription[29] of Nāganikā, first century B.C., also records the performance of the sacrifice by a Sātavāhana king.

The features of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice are not mentioned in the Purāṇa, but it is obvious from other Sanskrit texts[30] that the royal consecration ceremony was performed for the purpose of conferring powers on the new king. Its primary object was to celebrate one's paramount power. It was an optional religious rite, undertaken with a set object and included a ceremony of consecration. It displayed many popular elements in character with the great nobles and office-bearers playing an important part.

The *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, whose antiquity goes back to the Vedic age,[31] has been described in Sūtra literature in great detail. The epics[32] and Purāṇas[33] are also acquainted with this sacrifice. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[34] gives interesting references to the horse-sacrifices performed by several kings like Śivi, Janaka, Somadatta, etc. It narrates in detail the story of the performance of horse sacrifice by king Sagara.[35] The *avabhṛta snāna* of this sacrifice has also been mentioned in our Purāṇa and it was regarded as a great religious merit[36] and as the final purificatory bath.[37] Jaimini[38] lays down that *avabhṛta* is a special rite in the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice.

It is evident that the horse-sacrifice and other sacrifices were actually performed in the age of our Purāṇa. We have seen that the Vedic sacrifices were revived in the Śuṅga period.[39] Other contemporary evidences show that the Vedic religion and sacrifices were fairly popular in society. A number of Vedic sacrifices were performed by the rulers of the period down to the fourth century A.D. The horse-sacrifice was very popular among kings and petty rulers. It was celebrated not only by big emperors like Pravara Sena I (A.D. c. 275), Samudra Gupta (A.D. c. 375), and others but also small kings like Śāntamūla of the Ikṣvāku dynasty (A.D. c. 250).[40] The great Vākāṭaka emperor Pravara-Sena I not only performed four horse-sacrifices, but also celebrated *Agniṣṭoma*, *Aptoryāma*, *Ukthya*, *Ṣodaśin*, *Bṛhaspatisava* and *Vājapeya*. *Agniṣṭoma*, *Vājapeya*

and *Aśvamedha* were performed by the Ikṣvākus[41] also. The Maukharis of Gayā were a petty ruling family, but they had celebrated a large number of Vedic sacrifices in the fourth century A.D. Two chiefs near Jaipur are mentioned to have performed sacrifice towards the end of the third century A.D.[42] One Malawa chief, who became independent in A.D. 226, celebrated the *Ekaṣaṣṭi-rātra-sattra* which was quite an appropriate one for the occasion.[43] Another local ruler of Bharatpur performed the Puṇḍarika sacrifice in A.D. 372.[44] Thus the available evidences show that the Vedic sacrifices were popular during the age of our Purāṇas.

There are also references to the domestic sacrifices like *pāka-yajña* in our Purāṇa.[45] The main features of this sacrifice can be marked in other texts. The *pāka-yajña* according to the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, are of three kinds the *hūtas*, viz. the sacrifices offered over the fire; over something that is not the fire *prahūtas*; and the feeding of the brāhmaṇas.[46] Manu[47] has mentioned four forms of this domestic sacrifice, while Gautama[48] refers to seven kinds of *pāka-yajña*, viz.. *Aṣṭaka Parvana* (offered on the new and full-moon days), the funeral oblations, *Śrāvaṇī*, *Agrahāyanī*, *Chaitrī*, and *Aśvayuyī*. These are not mentioned in our Purāṇa, but their details can be found in the Gṛhya Sūtra literature.[49]

The performance of the *Pañcha-mahāyajña* was incumbent on every householder[50] According to Smṛtikāras, these were the sacrifices offered to the brāhmaṇas, the offering of water to the means, the burnt oblation, the sacrifice offered to the gods, the *bali* offering to the Bhūtas, and the hospitable reception of the guests, the offering of men. The wife joined her husband in the performance of these sacrifices, and she was entitled to an equal share of the fruits.

*Accessories and essential of sacrifices* : The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* indirectly shows the acquaintance with several accessories and essential things in the sacrifices. The *Yajmāna*[51] and *Purohita*[52] form the essential parts of sacrifice. The *Yajmāna* and *Purohita* form the essential parts of sacrifice. The *Yajmāna* used to perform a sacrifice

for securing some desired things. The priest[53] used to help his *Yajmāna* in the performance of the sacrifice. Sometimes *Yajmāna* used to choose his priest according to his own desire.[54] The priests were called *Hotṛ*.[55] The functions of the *Hotṛ* are clearly defined in the *Ṛgveda*;[56] his chief duty was to recite the Śāstras. Oldenburg's suggestions[57] seem to be true when he suggests that this priest ceased to be a priest of any importance in later literature.

The accessories of a sacrifice, as mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, are *ghrta*[58] (ghee), *puroḍāśa*[59] *śruk*[60] (ladle of oblation), *adhma*[61] (fuel), and *darbha*[62] (holy grass). The prayers were also enchanted at the time of sacrifice. The Purāṇa also refers to *svāha*[63] (the prayer of oblation), *udgīti* (the tone of its chanting), oblation,[64] *chiti*[65] (alter), *prāgvaṁśa*[66] (sacrificial chamber) and *patnīśāla*[67] (chamber for females).

The construction of a *yūpa* in the sacrifice was also essential. Our Purāṇa gives only passing reference to it,[68] but not its details. It is clear from other sources that the *yūpa* was set up for binding the sacrificial animal.[69] It was associated with the vedic sacrifices.[70] The details, regarding the shapes and sizes of the *yūpa*, are not mentioned in our Purāṇa; but it is clear from other texts that in the case of the *Vājapeya* sacrifice its heights should be 17 cubits,[71] and in others it varied from five to fifteen cubits. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[72] its octagonal shape is compared to the eight syllables of each line of the Gāyatrī metre. The stem was never straight, but curved both at the top and at the centre, and at a distance of two to eight inches from the top of the post was ring.[73]

The existence of the use of *yūpa* in the second century B.C. and onwards can be attested by the *Mahābhāṣya*[74] and the epic literature.[75] Some contemporary archaeological evidences also support this fact. The stone *yūpa* of the Kuṣāṇa age has been discovered.[76] Some numismatic evidences also support its existence. The bull, standing before a symbol[77] differently represented on the earliest coins of the Arjunāyanas and the Yaudheyas (collectively to be dated in the 2nd-3rd century B.C. or a little later), may very

well represent a bull before the *yūpa*, i.e., sacrificial post. Some other tribal coins also represent the curved shaped *yūpas*. On the obverve side of the *Aśvamedha*[78] coin type of Samudragupta there is a horse standing before a carved *yūpa*.

The duration of sacrifice, fruits accruing from them, the *dakṣiṇā* given to the brāhmaṇas are other minor points for worth-consideration. Our Purāṇa refers to *yajñas* lasting for five hundred years[79] or even thousand years[80] a clear exaggeration. The *Pañcha-mahāyajñas* were to be performed every day. As regards the fruits of the sacrifices the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is not very clear.

It is clear from our Purāṇa that the sacrifices were performed for securing certain desired things. We are informed that Parāśara performed many sacrifices for the destruction of Rākṣasas.[81] It was generally believed that through the performance of sacrifice men would acquire heavenly fruition or final felicity and they would go to desired heaven.[82] The performance of sacrifice was essential for the preservation of kingdom and king's life and for the benefit of all subjects.[83]

The offering of sacrificial fee also played an important part in the performance of a sacrifice.[84] The practice of giving *daksiṇā* in a sacrifice can be seen even in the Vedic literature.[85] It is stated in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[86] that no priest should officiate at a Soma sacrifice for a fee less than one hundred cows. Our Purāṇa[87] is also acquainted with this practice, but it does not mention the various articles for *daksiṇā*. It refers to the offering of *daksiṇā* to brāhmaṇas after the dinner in *śrāddha* function.[88] In many other sacrifices, brāhmaṇas used to get magnificent donation by the sacrificers.[89] It seems to be an important source of income for brāhmaṇas.

The slaughtering of animals in the sacrifice, which can be traced in the vedic literature,[90] and other sources,[91] is also found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[92] which refers to many animals to be slaughtered at the time of sacrifice and the *śrāddha* function, and these are fish, hare, mongoose, wild boar, goat, deer, sheep, etc. It is also clear from a

story in our Purāṇa that many beasts were killed during the time of the *Giriyajña* performed by Gopas at Maṭhura.[93]

It is further clear from the Purāṇa[94] that these were a few people in society who were against the slaughtering of beasts in the sacrifices. This fact can be traced in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* which says that the persons who really do not understand the meaning of the Vedas kill the animals for their own pleasure. Thus the foregoing discussion shows that several kinds of sacrifices were prevalent in the society of the age of our Purāṇa.

*Heretics or Heterodox* :

There were some religious sects in ancient India which did not believe in gods and challenged the authority of the vedas. The *Suttanipāta*, in one of its section named *Mahāvagga*,[95] mentions sixty different philosophical schools—probably all of them non-brahmanical and existed at the time of the Buddha. The Jain literature[96] also refers to many heretical doctrines. The sixth century B.C. witnessed the rise of two important heretical doctrines, i.e., Buddhism and Jainism in India. Both religious sects did not regard the Vedas and the brāhmaṇas, ignored the *varṇāśramadharma*, and cared little for the Vedic gods. They were bitterest enemies of Brahmanism. During the life-time of Mahāvīra the spread of Jainism was rather limited. After the death of Mahāvīra about B.C. 468,[97] his disciples and followers succeeded in popularising the faith to a great extent. Jainism gained the support of kings like Ajātśatru, Udayin, Nanda, Samprati and even Khāravela. Buddhism also attracted the attention of kings and commoners. Aśoka and Kaniṣka are regarded as great patrons of Buddhism. It is clear from this short introduction that heretical sects were prevalent in society since long time.[98]

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* does not fail to mention the existing heretical sects, but their names are not mentioned therein. We have several evidences in the Purāṇa to show that Buddhism and Jainism were prevalent in that age. At one place it is mentioned in the Purāṇa that Māyā-moha, produced from the body of Viṣṇu, went to the bank of

the Narmadā in the semblance of a naked mendicant, with head shaved and carrying a bunch of peacock's feathers. He preached the Daityas the teachings of Digambara[99] and Sāmbara.[100] He also advised the Daitya to follow the religion of *Arhat*,[101] and hence by following the religion of Arhat, they were called *Arhat*. All these references clearly show the existence of Jainism in the age of our Purāṇa. This fact can also be strengthened by other contemporary evidences. From the evidence of the Hāthīgumphā inscription we know that Khāravela was a strong upholder of the Jain religion.[102] According to the Jain literature, Samprati, a grand-son of Aśoka, was the follower of Jainism. Several inscriptions, found at Mathurā, show that in the period ranging from about the middle of the second century to the end of the Kuṣāṇa age Jainism was well-established in Mathurā.[103] The numerous caves on the Udaigiri and Khanda giri hills testify to the continued existence of the Jain faith in North India in the second century B.C.[104] The country near Ujjaini was also a stronghold of Jainism during the second century B.C.[105] and even later on. The famous story of Kālakāchārya the Jain sage implies the spread of Jainism in Malawa in the first century B.C. Jainism was also in existence in the Kuṣāṇa period at it is clear from some archaeological evidences.[106]

Buddhism was prevalent in the age of our Purāṇa. It is clear from the Purāṇa that the *Māyā Moha*, wearing the red clothes,[107] went to Daityas and preached them the teachings of *ahiṁsā*.[108] He also showed them the path of *Nirvāna* or salvation. He also said, "World is *Vijñānamaya* and it subsists without support and it is also engaged in the pursuit of error and the people always move in the world of distress for passion and bad things."[109] All these teachings, we may suggest, clearly point out to Buddhism. Other contemporary sources also confirm the existence of Buddhism in that age.[110] It is interesting to note in this connection that the great Buddhist Stupa at Bharhut was erected during the reign of the Śuṅgas.[111] Buddhism was also popular in the Śaka-Kṣatrapa period.[112] From the inscription of the reign of Rajuvula it is evident that Sarvāstivādins and Mahāsaṁghikas were there, and the former was assigned a more important

position in that age. Even in the Sātavāhana age, this religion was not neglected. Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi appears to have favoured the Mahāsaṁghikas at Karle.[113] Buddhism flourished throughout the period of the Sātavāhanas who first tolerated, and later on actively partronised it.[114] It was also partronised by the Kuṣāṇa rulers.[115]

The Purāṇa uses two terms *Nagna* and *Pāṣaṇḍa* for heretics or deniers of the Vedas. The Buddhist and Jains must have been included in this group. We have seen that Māyā-moha preached some heretical doctrines which were not other than Buddhism and Jainism. The terms *Nagna* and *Pāṣaṇḍa* have been used not only for the Buddhist and Jains, but for entire heretics who did not believe in God. While defining *Nagna*, the Purāṇa says, "*Ṛgveda*, *Yayurveda* and *Sāmaveda* constitute the triple covering of the several castes, and the sinner who throws this off is called the *Nagna*. The three vedas are the raiment of the orders of men, and when that is discarded they are left bare."[116] This idea is expressed in nearly the same terms in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. It is to be noted here that to go naked was not necessarily a sign of a heretic, and therefore, his nudity was understood to be rejecting the raiment of holy writ. Hence, it is clear that those, who discarded Vedas, were known as *Nagnas* or *Pāṣaṇḍas*.

Our Purāṇa[117] further extends the limit of the *Nagnas* to those brāhmaṇas and men of other castes, who turn their faces away from their proper duties. They are also classed with those who relinquish pious work. The Purāṇa also says that the unrighteous man, who relinquishes the order of the householder, and does not become either an anchoret or a mendicant, is also a naked.[118] The śūdras were also included in this group. The Purāṇa ordains, "Śūdra, seeking a subsistence by begging, and assuming the outward marks of religious mendicants, will become the impure followers of impious and heretical doctrine."[119] Thus it is clear that the sphere of *Nagna* and *Pāṣaṇḍas* was wide and even those who were against the Vedas and *varṇāśramadharma* were included in it.

We get an idea about the origin of the *Nagna* in our Purāṇa. Parāśara, while relating a story about the origin of the *Nagnas*, refers

to the Devāsura[120] battle and the ultimate defeat of the gods at the hands of Daityas. We are told that being defeated by Asuras, gods practised severe penance, and prayed to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu was pleased enough to make his appearance. The gods then propitiated him to help the former in the war against the Daityas. Those Daityas, being the followers of the Vedic rites, could not be defeated by the gods.[121] Viṣṇu created Māyā-moha out of his own body. Having shaved his head and with a peacok's feather on it, Māyā-moha went to the bank of the Narmadā, where the Daityas were practising penances. Māyā-moha preached amongst them the religion of Nagna. Next he put a red clothes and preached them the lesson of *ahiṁsā*. The Daityas soon abandoned the Vedic religion and consequently they got weakened. Thus those who came under the influence of Māyā-moha, gave up the vedic practices and came to be known as the *Nagnas*. It is very difficult to believe the historicity of the story of the origin of the *Nagna*. But it is clear that the idea of heretics was of great antiquity.

We get some general features of the *Nagnas* and the *Pāṣaṇḍas* in the Purāṇa. It is clear from the Purāṇa that the *Nagnas* were against the Vedas[122] and Vedic religion. They believed that the words of authority (*āpta-vachana*) did not fall from heaven. They only acknowledged the text which was based on reasoning.[123] They blasphemed the gods, treated sacrifices and other devotional ceremonies with scorn and culminated the brāhmaṇas. The Purāṇa quotes the remark of *Nagnas* about the sacrifice and oblation which runs as follows, "The precepts that led to the injury of animal life are highly reprehensible. To say that casting butter into flame is productive of reward, is mere childishness. If Indra, after having obtained godhead by multiplied rites, is fed upon the wood used as fuel in holy fire, he is lower than a brute, which feeds at least upon leaves."[124] *Nagnas* are also against the sacrifices as it is clear from other passage which runs as follows, "If an animal slaughtered in religious worship is thereby raised to heaven, would it not be expedient for man who institutes a sacrifice to kill his own father for a victim."[125] They were alsoagainst the *śrāddha* function and feeding the brāhmaṇas, "It says that, which is eaten by one at a *śrāddha* gives satisfaction to another, it must be

unnecessary for one who resides at a distance to bring food for presentation in person." They did not believe in *śrāddha* ceremony. The Purāṇa marks the increasing tendency in the Kali age. It says that in the Kali age, men, corrupted by Pāṣaṇḍa, will refrain from adorning Viṣṇu, the lord of sacrifice, the creator and lord of all; and will say, "of what authority are the Veda? What are gods or brāhmaṇas? What need is there of purification with water?" We also read in the Purāṇa that the Nagnas assume the twisted hair, or shave head and do not offer food to gods, spirits and guests, and they are excluded from the presentation of *Pitṛ-piṇda* and libations of water to the manes. Thus it is clear that the Nagnas and *Pāṣaṇḍas* practised *ahiṁsā*, did not regard the Vedas and the brāhmaṇas, ignored the gods, did not recognise caste distinctions, and cared little for the *varṇāśrama dharma*.

The heretics have been vehemently criticised in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and it, at first advises the people not to establish any contact with heretics. It says, "There is no sinner upon earth more culpable than one in whose dwelling the gods, progenitors and spirits are left to sigh unworshipped. Let not a man associate in residence, sitting in society, with him whose person or whose house has been blasted by the sighes of the gods, progenitors and spirits."[126] The Purāṇa does not even permit a man to talk[127] with heretics, and it further says, "Conversation, interchange of civilities, or association with a man who for a twelve month has not discharged his religious duties, is productive of equality of guilt; and the person who eats in the house of such a man, or sits down with him, or sleeps on the same couch with him, becomes like him instantly."[128] The conversation with the *Pāṣaṇḍas* has been regarded as a sin in the Purāṇa. Due to such association with sin, people of brahmanical faith might not have contacted the heretics.

In order to warn the people against the keeping of contact with heretics, the Purāṇa fabricated a story of king Śatadhanu who once talked with a Pāṣaṇḍa and as a result of it the king was degraded in next, and took his birth as several animals.[129] The motive underlying such story is undoubtedly to attract the mind of people towards the

results of the conversation with the heretics. The *Kūrma Purāṇa*[130] has also advised the people not to contact the *Pāṣaṇḍas*.

They were discarded even in brahmanical religious functions as the Purāṇa prohibits the *Pāṣaṇḍas* from taking part in the *śrāddha* ceremony.[131] It is due to the fact that the *Pāṣaṇḍas* were against the *śrāddha* ceremony, so they were not to be invited in such function.

The reason for the strong attitude, taken by the Purāṇakāra, is clear. The *Pāṣaṇḍas* or *Nagnas* may be called deniers or unbelievers. They were against Brahmanism. Their doctrine of *ahiṁsā*, their disbelief in the efficacy of funeral rites and sacrifices, etc., their disregard for the vedas and the brāhmaṇas probably affected the economic condition of the brāhmaṇas. The doctrine of *ahiṁsā* was against Vedic sacrifices which were the main sources of income to the priests. The brāhmaṇas did not like the criticism of sacrifices. Such criticism must have been detrimental to the interests of the priestly brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas would not have tolerated such hostile attitude of the Pāṣaṇḍas towards the brahmanical faith. That is why the Purāṇakāra, being a staunch brāhmaṇa, has seriously tried to check the progress of these deniers. The denouncement of the *Pāṣaṇḍas* must have helped the brāhmaṇas to stem the rising tide of the anti-vedic sects. The brāhmaṇas might have been aware of the entry of the śūdras into the fold of heretic sects as the Purāṇa[132] speaks of the wooing of the śūdras and heretical sects in the Kali age. Such entry of the śūdras into the heretical sects might have been detrimental to the interest of the brāhmaṇas and of other privileged classes in society. It may be pointed out that the heretics considered sacrifices as a mere policy of the brāhmaṇas. They practised *ahiṁsā* and did not respect the vedas and the brāhmaṇas. These ideas must have created bitterness between the heretics and brāhmaṇas. As the heretics were enemies of brāhmaṇas, so the compiler of our Purāṇa, being a brāhmaṇa, has scornfully criticised them.

*Vaiṣṇavism* :

Before dicussing the features of this sect in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, it is essential to give an outline of the rise of Vaiṣṇavism. Vaiṣṇavism,

according to the *Mahābhārata*,[133] is same as Bhāgavatism, Ekāntika, Vāsudevism, Sātvata, etc. The *Pañcharātra* and the Bhāgavata, though originally different, are designated by the term Vaiṣṇava.[134] Materials for the study of the early history of this religion are so scanty that we can not point definitely how this system grew up. The sect of Vaiṣṇavism was popular in the pre-Christian era. Various systems and superstitions were prevalent in the fourth century B.C. as the *Niddeśa*,[135] and important Pali Buddhistic canon, refers to devotees and followers of Ājivaka, Niganthas, Jaṭilas, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Aggi, Nāgas, Yakka, etc. Here a Buddhist work, which is expected, to show scant courtesy to religious sects other than its own, places the worshippers of Vāsudeva and Baladeva on the same level with those of fire, sun, Yakka, etc. This shows the popularity of Vāsudevism in the fourth century B.C. Pāṇini mentions[136] the formation of word "Vāsudevaka" which stands for "a man the object of whose Bhakti is Vāsudeva." The worship of Vāsudeva must be regarded to be as old as Pāṇini. Megasthenes, a Greek-ambassador in the court of Chandra Gupta Maurya, discloses that the worship of Viṣṇu was very popular among the Śūrasenas.[137] Kauṭilya, in his Arthaśāstra, also mentions the worshippers of god Saṁkarṣaṇa. The earliest records of Vaiṣṇavism are contained in the *Mahābhārata*[138] and the *Bhagavat gītā*. These two books shed ample light on the features of this religion. This religion must have been very popular by that time. Patañjali, in his *Mahābhāṣya*,[139] refers to *Vāsudeva-vargyah* and "Vāsudeva-Varginaḥ" (i.e. the worshippers of Vāsudeva) and regards Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva as a divine being rather than a mere Kṣatriya.[140] In an inscription at Ghosundi[141] in Rajputana, the constuction of a wall round the hall of worship of Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva is mentioned. This inscription has been dated in the second century B.C. In another inscription discovered at Besnagar,[142] Heliodorus, who calls himself a Bhāgavata, is said to have created a *garuḍadhvaja* or a column with the image of *garuḍa* at the top in the honour of Vāsudeva, the god of gods. This inscription also belongs to the pre-Christian era. Thus it is clear that at that time Vāsudeva was worshipped as the god of gods and his followers were known as Bhāgavats. The Bhāgavata religion

prevailed in North-Western part of India, and was adopted even by the Greeks. The Nanaghat cave inscription,[143] which belongs to the first century before the Christian era, begins the invocation of several gods, including Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva.

The study of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* sheds ample light on the features of Vaiṣṇavism. The Bhāgavata sect or Vaiṣṇavism does not seem to be favourable to Vedic cult. The image worship of Kṛṣṇa and of Viṣṇu appears to be very popular in the Purāṇa which refers to Viṣṇu as having four hands,[144] and lotus eye (*puṇḍarikākṣa*).[145] He wears several garments[146] and ornaments,[147] and holds several weapons.[148] Great emphasis has also been laid on the performance of worship of Kṛṣṇa. The Purāṇa says, "The man who with well-governed passions bathes at Mathurā on the twelfth day of the month Jyeṣṭha, and beholds (the image of) Hari, obtains a great recompense; so does he who with mind fixed upon Keśava attentively ricites this Purāṇa. The man who bathes in the waters of the Yamunā on the twelfth lunation of the light fortnight of the month in which the moon is in the mansion Jyeṣṭha, and who fasts and worship Achyuta in the city of Mathurā receives the reward of an uninterrupted Aśvamedha.[149] There are also other verses[150] in the Purāṇa but it is needless to amplify them. So it is clear that image worship was popular in the age of our Purāṇa. A few images of Kṛṣṇa and of Viṣṇu, discovered in the pre-Gupta age, also corroborate the existence of image worship. But in the Vedic texts,[151] there is no provision for the image worship of god. This clearly shows the difference between the Vaidic and the Bhāgavatas.

The *Pañcharātra* system was considered as out of the fold of the vedas.[152] The *Mahābhārata* itself admits that this system is quite different from the vedic. It says, "Know, O' saintly king, Sāṁkhya, the Yoga, the Pañcharātra, the Vedas and the Pāśupata as knowledges holding different views."[153] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* dwells on the division of the vedic texts, but it does not glorify these texts. Being a *Pañcharātra* work, the Purāṇa attaches much importance to its own book. The Purāṇa, while praising its own text in high-sounding words, says that the listening of the first *Amśa* of the Purāṇa expiates all offences.[154] The man who hears this Purāṇa obtains the fruits of bathing

in the Puṣkara lake for 12 years in the month of Kārttika.[155] Our Purāṇa further adds, "By hearing this Purāṇa an equal recompense is obtained to that which is derived from the performance of an *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, or from fasting at the holy places Prayāga, Puṣkara, Kuruksetra. Hearing this Purāṇa once is a efficacious as the offering of oblations in a perpetual fire a year.[156] There are several other verses in the Purāṇa[157] which glorify the Pur āṇa itself. These instances clearly show the importance of the Purāṇa. It is obvious from other literary sources that several *Pañcharātra* texts are no less important than the Vedas. In the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata* we are told that there were seven Chitra-Śikhaṇḍin ṛṣis who proclaimed on the mount Meru, a śāstra which was on a par with the four vedas.[158] It was made consistent with the vedas.[159] A few verses in the *Gīta*[160] also do notat tach much importance to the Vedas.

The Purāṇa does not devote verses on the glory of the vedas is not clear to us. The reason can be pointed out on the basis of conjecture. It is well known that the vedas were roots of all knowledges and they were not understood by every one. During the time of Yāska there was want of sages for explaining the vedic texts. Aurovinda[161] opines that during the time of the Upaniṣad, sages were not able to explain the Vedic texts but they only acknowledged the authority of those texts. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* , the vedas have been put into the category of *aparā-vidyā*. This attitude gave a blow of the utility of of the Vedas. It might have been the similar case during the time of Purāṇa, when the Vedas had lost their real meaning and priests associated themselves only with the sacrifices and ritual performance. In such a condition we may conclude that the Purāṇa neither gives up the Vedas nor glorifies them in high-sounding words nor criticises them.

Our Purāṇa, as we have seen, refers to the performance of several Vedic sacrifices, but it does not attach much importance to them. It attaches much value to the hearing of the Purāṇa, and to the worship of Kṛṣṇa-image rather than horse-sacrifices.[162] We can easily understand the value attached to horse-sacrifices in our Purāṇa. This sacrifice was decidedly of great importance in the vedic age, but not

in the age of our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa also gives similar remark to the performance of Agnihotra, for it says, "Hearing this Purāṇa but once is as efficacious as the offering of oblations in a perpetual fire for a year."[163] We may conclude that similar might have been the case with other Vedic sacrifices also. We have already noted down that the Vedic sacrifices were in vogue only among the rich people of society. The early smṛtis[164] expressly state that they should be performed only by those who have provisions in their stores sufficient for three years. We hardly come across the commoners performing them. The general population had definitely veered round to the *smārta* religion dominated by devotion and due to the teaching of the *Bhāgavadgītā*. Besides, the Vedic sacrifices were full of rituals and violence.[165] General people might have expressed their unwillingness towards the violence of the sacrifices. The complicated rituals were also not suitable for common people. Thus it seems that the Bhāgavatas might have taken opportunity from such circumstances and opposed the sacrifices which were full of violence. The Purāṇa under review also lays emphasis on non-violence and it says that a man who does not injure anything is regarged as a worshipper of Viṣṇu.[166]

Though the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* favours non-violence, at the same time it refers to the offering of flesh of several animals in the *śrāddha* ceremony. It looks like a paradox as the two opposite views have been mentioned in the Purāṇa. There might have been a section of people who favoured the offering of flesh in rituals. For this reason the Purāṇa appears to have mentioned such offerings.

It is further clear from our Purāṇa that Bhāgavatism does not attach much importance to caste-restriction. We read in the Purāṇa that the follwers of the caste-system are regarded as the devotees of Viṣṇu.[167] It does not put any caste restriction for being a devotee of Visnu. It seems probable that the śūdras were not excluded from being the devotees of Viṣṇu. The Purāṇa also refers to the hunter, after shooting Kṛṣṇa, prayed the latter.[168] The hunter, through the favour of Kṛṣṇa, went to heaven. It shows that degraded persons like hunters were also able to pray or to worship Kṛṣṇa. The Bhāgavata dharma was open to women also. The Purāṇa refers to

women like Pṛthivī[169] and Devakī[170] who prayed to Viṣṇu. The *Mahābhārata*[171] and the *Bhāgavadgītā*[172] too allow women and the śūdras to worship Viṣṇu.

The foreigners also embraced the cult of Bhāgavata. Though our Purāṇa does not give any corroborating evidences, it is clear from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*[173] that the Kirātas, the Hūṇas, the Pulindas, the Ābhiras, the Kaṁkas, the Yavanas, the Khasas, etc., are entitled to get the favour of Viṣṇu. It is futher obvious from the *Kūmra-Purāṇa*[174] that Keśava composed *Pañcharātra tantra* for the protection of those people who were outside the fold of Vedic religion (*vedavyāhyānani rakṣaṇārtha*). We have already referred to the Besnagar inscription which mentions Heliodorus Greek ambassodor as a devotee of Vāsudeva. It shows that the casteless foreigneers were freely admitted into the Bhāgavata fold. The foregoing discussion indicates that Vaiṣṇavism of the epic and the Purāṇas was open to women, śūdras, foreigners, and they were allowed to worship Viṣṇu themselves. The śūdras were regarded as most degraded caste, and women were not fit for the performance of the vedic sacrifices. The foreigners, who were settling on Indian soil, were desirous to embrace Hindusim. Bhāgavatism recognised the situation, and allowed the śūdras, women and even foreigners, the large part of population, into its fold.

The Bhāgavata Dharma in the Purāṇa lays much emphasis on the devotion to Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa. The Purāṇa fabricates several stories of Dhruva, of Prahlāda and so on to show the importance of the favour of Viṣṇu. Dhruva,[175] completely concentrating his mind on Viṣṇu, performed penance, and as a result of it the latter appeared before the former. Viṣṇu also protected his devotee named Prahlāda[176] from troubles created by king Hiraṇyakaśipu. There are other several stories which all show that Viṣṇu protected his devotees. It is not essential to refer to them all. The Purāṇa also attaches importance to the taking or remembering the name of Kṛṣṇa. It says, "That rewards which a man obtains in the *Kṛta* by abstract meditation, in the *Tretā* by sacrifice, in the *Dvāpara* by adoration, he receives in the *Kali* by merely reciting the name of Keśava."[177] We further know

from the Purāṇa that during the Kali age a man, by remembering the names of Kṛṣṇa, gets the highest heaven.[178] Several verses have been devoted to the worship and the devotion of Kṛṣṇa.[179] So the religious activities like gifts, sacrifices, penance, etc., are of lesser value in comparison to the devotion of Viṣṇu. This fact can be corroborated by the *Mahābhārata*, the earliest *Pañcharātra* literature, which mentions that once Vasu Uparichara performed an extensive horse-sacrifice, but no animal was killed on that occasion. The god of gods showed himself to Vasu and accepted his oblation, but was unseen by anybody else. Since the oblation was taken away by Hari without showing himself to Bṛhaspati the latter got angry and threw away the sacrificial ladle. When Bṛhaspati became angry, other sages, present in that sacrifice said that the great Hari was not to be seen by any man at random, but by one who was favoured his grace.[180] This story in the epic also shows that the sacrifice, penances, etc. do not bear the same importance as the Bhakti does.

*The Vyūha System* :

The conception of Vyūha system holds important position in the Bhāgavata cult. It is essential to point out that the *Bhāgavadgītā*, being an important book on this cult, does not contain any allusion to the Vyūha, or forms of the supreme, Saṁkarṣaṇa and others while the latter form an impotant feature of the Bhāgavata cult. The *Gītā* only mentions the *Prakṛtis* of Vāsudeva the five elements; the mind, *buddhi* or knowledge, and egoism as well as *jīva*.[181] The last is indentified with Saṁkarṣaṇa in the Bhāgavata cult, egoism with aniruddha, and mind with which probably *buddhi* is associated with Pradyumna. It appears that the *Gītā* was composed before the rise of the Vyūha doctrine. Hence, it does not refer to it. After the composition of the *Gītā*, three of the *Prakṛtis* of Vāsudeva were personified with Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, who were members of the family of Vāsudeva. As it is clear from the inscriptions[182] and the passage from the *Niddeśa*[183] that Saṁkarṣaṇa was alone associated with Vāsudeva in early times. Patañjali[184] also refers to a verse in which it is mentioned that certain musical instruments

are sounded in a gathering in the shrine of Dhanapati, Rāma, and Keśava. Here Rāma and Keśava stand for Balarāma and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa respectively. The *Mahābhāṣya*, while commenting on Pāṇini VI. 3.6, refers to "Janārdana with himself as the fourth," i.e., with three companions. If this verse may be taken to allude to the three Vyūhas, than it is easily presumed that the four-Vyūhas, then it is easily presumed that the four-Vyūhas Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, were well recognised in age of Patañjali. But still it is doubtful because the two Vyūhas, Vāsudeva and Saṁkarṣaṇa only are known from the inscriptions belonging to the first century B.C. It appears that it was not fully developed in that period.

A clear-cut idea of the conception of Vyūha doctrines can be found in the *Mahābhārata* where the great Nārāyaṇa is represented to have explained the religion of Vāsudeva and his three other forms (Vyūhas). Nārāyaṇa identifies himself with Vāsudeva in his four Vyūhas.[185] It appears that in the early time, the Vyūhas of Vāsudeva were not known. With the rise of the religion, taught in the Bhāgavadgītā, Vāsudeva came into prominence. Later on Vāsudeva and his brother Saṁkarṣaṇa, his son Pradyumna and his grand-son Aniruddha were associated with the conception of Vyūhas.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, being a Vaiṣṇava work, also refers to Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha the four Vyūhas. Vāsudeva has been mentioned with different names such as Govinda,[186] Keśava,[187] Dāmodara,[188] Madhusūdana,[189] Upendra,[190] and so on. The Purāṇa gives an exhaustive description of the achievements of Kṛṣṇa, but it is not essential to go through the exploits of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is represented as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. The main pupose of this inscarnation was to relieve the earth from its burden.[191] He took his birth to reduce the subjection of all the violators of law. He could get success in destroying and killing several Rākṣasas and Daityas. It must be mentioned that the earliest part of the *Mahābhārata* represents him as a human hero, a religious teacher and a counsellor of the Pāṇḍavas. Later on, due to the rise of bhakti movement, he is raised gradually to divinity as a semi-divine, a

partial incarnation of Viṣṇu.[192] The reference in the *Mahābhāṣya* clearly shows that the deification of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was complete before his time.[193]

*Kṛṣṇa*

The Purāṇa has identified Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa. While explaining the term Nārāyaṇa, the Purāṇa says, "The water are called Nāra, because they were the offspring of Nāra (the supreme spirit); and as in them is first (Ayaṇa) progress (in the character of Brahmā) took place, he is thence named Nārāyaṇa (he whose place of moving was the water)."[194] Manu[195] also supports the same view. Bhandarkar[196] opines that idea of Nārāyaṇa was developed in the period of the later Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas. In the *Mahābhārata* and Purāṇas, Nārāyaṇa figures as the supreme god, especially in connection with the creation. He is represented as lying on the body of a huge serpent in the ocean of milk. Nārāyaṇa, thus, became an object of worship. Bhandarkar[197] opines, "Nārāyaṇa, being thus evolved as the Supreme Being in the later Brāhmaṇic period, was of course prior to Vāsudeva, and in the epic times when the worship of the latter arose Vāsudeva was identified with Nārāyaṇa." The Mahābhārata[198] also recognises the identification of Nārāyaṇa with Vāsudeva. The whole *Nārāyaṇiya* section seems to prove the identity between the gods. Our Purāṇa, being a work later than the *Mahābhārata.* also recognises the identity of these two gods.

The Purāṇa also identifies Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa is always represented with four arms holding Śaṁkha, Chakra, Gada,[199] etc. He used the Sudarśana[200] Chakra in battle against Indra. Garuḍa, the vehicle of Viṣṇu, was also used by Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is also represented as the supreme deity.[201] He is cause of creation, continuance and dissolution.[202] The Purāṇa uses several epithets of supreme god for Kṛṣṇa.[203]The reason for the identification of Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu appears to be obvious. It is well known that Viṣṇu is a Vedic deity and his personality was by no means unimportant in the Vedic age.[204] Viṣṇu began to rise in importantce in the time of the Brāhmaṇas.[205] During the epic and Purāṇic period, he rose to the position of the supreme

god. In epic period Viṣṇu was regarded as the supreme spirit. Thus Vāsudeva, a new prominent god was identified with Viṣṇu. In the *Mahābhārata*,[206] the supreme god is mentioned as Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu and is identified with Vāsudeva. Bhandarkar[207] conjectures that between the period of the *Bhāgavadgītā* and that of *Anugītā*, the identity of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa had become and established fact.

The cult of Kṛṣṇa was gaining popularity in the age of our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa emphatically lays emphasis on the worship of Kṛṣṇa. It says that the reward which a man obtains in the Kṛta age by abstract meditation, in the Tretā by sacrifice, in the Dvāpara by adoration, he receives in the Kali age by merely reciting the name of Keśava,[208] i.e., Kṛṣṇa. We are also told that all gods worshipped Kṛṣṇa with incense and flowers culled from the groves of Nandana.[209] Prahlāda due to the recollection of Kṛṣṇa, could bear the dash given by elephants.[210] The existence of the cult of Kṛṣṇa in the period of our Purāṇa can be corroborated by some archaeological evidences. The earliest sculptures[211] representing a scene from the life of Kṛṣṇa dates from the early Kuṣāṇa period. The inscriptions at Ghosundi and Nanaghat,[212] also refer to the worship of Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva. Other inscriptions[213] also bear the testimony to the divinity of Kṛṣṇa.

It is further clear from the Purāṇa that Kṛṣṇa spent his childhood on the bank of the Yamuna[214]. The Purāṇa speaks of the association of Kṛṣṇa with Mathurā and the Yamuna.[215] The association of Kṛṣṇa with Mathurā can be confirmed by the evidences of the Jātaka literature[216] and the account of Greek ambassador.[217] Hence, Kṛṣṇa was associated with the Yamunā and Mathurā since long ago. The study of our Purāṇa clearly shows the prevalence of Kṛṣṇa cult in the region of Mathurā This fact can also be corroborated by the archaeological evidences. Several sculptures, relating to Kṛṣṇa-cult, belonging to the pre-Gupta period, have been discovered in Mathurā region.[218] So the cult of Kṛṣṇa was spreading over large area in the eastern Punjab and Uttar Pradesh since the Śuṅga period.[219]

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to the incidents of Vāsudeva's

life. He killed several demons such as Pūtanā,[220] Kāliya,[221] Vṛṣabhāsura,[222] Keśi,[223] and so on. Such incidents of Vāsudeva's life are not mentioned in the early *Pañcharātra* Saṁhitās. The *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata* indicates no knowledge of the existence of such activities of Kṛṣṇa. Sources other than *Pañcharātra* Saṁhitās like the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali and even the inscription of pre-Christian era do not refer to such incidents. The *Mahābhārata* does not know the boy Kṛṣṇa in Gokula. We know from the epic that the epithet Govind was given to him because in the form of a boar he found the earth in the water and he agitated.[224] In the *Śāntiparvan*[225] Kṛṣṇa says, "I am called Govinda by the gods, because formerly I found the earth which was lost and lodged in a den." But in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[226] Kṛṣṇa was called Govinda because he protected several cows. Thus the conception of Gopāl-Kṛṣṇa is not found in the *Mahābhārata*. According to Bhandarkar, the story of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood in Gokula was unknown till about the beginning of the Christian era.[227] He further opines that with the advents of the Ābhīras such stories came into prominence. He remarks, "about the end of the second century and in the third, the Ābhīras enjoyed high political position, they must have migrated into the country in the first century. They probably brought with them the worship of the boy-god, and the story of his humble birth, his reputed father's knowledge that he was not his son and the massacre of the innocents."[228] It has been suggested that stories of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood, such as that of killing Dhenukā, a demon in the form of a wild ass, were brought by Ābhīras,[229] and others were developed after they came to India. It becomes clear that before the final composition of our Purāṇa, these incidents of Vāsudeva's life were well-known in the society; and hence, the Purāṇa refers to such stories.

It is further clear from our Purāṇa that Kṛṣṇa was a disobedient and mischievous boy. Kṛṣṇa played all sorts of mischievous games, stealing of butter, upsetting the pots of milk and curds.[230] Kṛṣṇa, once, found a woman on the road side named Kubjā, crooked and deformed, who gave him some fragrant ointment. His compassion was aroused and lifting up her head with his thumbs and two fingers

and pressing dowd her feet, with his feet, she stood before him upright.[231] We also find Kṛṣṇa's amorous dalliance with *gopīs*. He played *rāsalīlā* with *gopis*. The Purāṇa represents the true love between *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa. It is certainly a new erotic element in the cult of Kṛṣṇa. The story of Kṛṣṇa's relations with the gopis is found only in the Purāṇas, and is not met with in the Jātaka or the Great Epic. Where did this new spirit come from ? Some scholars have laboured to prove that it had its source in the Christianity; others have argued that it was not Christianity that was the debtor of India in this respect.[232] L.D. Barnett criticises these views and remarks that both theories are impossible.[233] He rightly remarks that the most natural conclusion is that it came from the Ābhīras, ancestor of modern Ahīra tribes.[234] The identification of Kṛṣṇa with Ābhīra's divinity appears to have been largely responsible for the introduction of such erotic element in the cult of Kṛṣṇa. It is clear that the Ābhīras, as found in the Purāṇa, were passing through nomadic life[235] and they were hankering after female.[236] So it appears that there was a gaeat freedom of sex in this tribe. So Kṛṣṇa also appears to us as a deity of Ābhīras playing *rāsa līlā* with *gopīs*.

The study of our Purāṇa further shows that Kṛṣṇa was closely associated with cattle. Kṛṣṇa devoted the large part of his childhood in rearing cattles.[237] His epethets Govinda, Gopāla also support his association with cattle. His association with cattle can be traced even in the Vedic age.[238]

*Balarāma* :

The another deity of Vyūha is Balarāma who was represented as an important god in the fourth century B.C.[239] and continued to hold the same position upto the second century B.C.[240] The epigraphic record of the first century B.C. also speaks of the glory of Baladeva.[241] Another inscription of the same period in a cave at Nanaghat invokes Samkarṣaṇa and Kṛṣṇa in a similar fashion.[242] It shows that even in the first century B.C. the popularity of Balarāma was undiminished. But in the Purāṇic literature[243] Balarāma appears to be secondary to Kṛṣṇa. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also refers to him as accompanying Kṛṣṇa

for the destruction of demons. It devotes much space on the exploits of Kṛṣṇa, whereas a few chapters[244] have been devoted to this god. The subordinate position of Saṁkarṣaṇa can be corroborated by the evidence of the *Mahābhārata*[245] where at one place Baladeva had to admit frankly that he could not dare to cast his eyes on the world without the favour of Kṛṣṇa. Due to the rise of the cult of Kṛṣṇa in Mathurā and its adjacent areas the cult of saṁkarṣaṇa began to diminish.

His exploits are mentioned in the Purāṇa that he killed demons like Dhenuka,[246] Pralamba.[247] He also accompanied Kṛṣṇa to kill Kaṁsa at Mathura.[248] Balarāma killed Dvivida the monkey demon.[249] There are other minor exploits of Balarāma but it is not essential to mention them all.

Our Purāna refers to the family of Balarāma. He married Revati[250] who was so tall that Balarāma by the use of his plough-share, managed to reduce her to a proper size. The Purāna also speaks of his two sons Niṣaṭha and Ulmuka.[251]

His favourite weapons were club,[252] a plough[253] and a pestle. His epithets plough-holder, plough bearer clearly indicate that plough was his most favourite weapon. The Purāna[254] also speaks of his epithet *tālaketu* which clearly shows that the emblem of his flag was a palm tree. The *Mahābhārata* also supports this fact.[255] The depiction of *tāla dhvaja* can be seen in the sculpture. A branch of palm leaves, belonging to the first century A.D., had been discovered.[256] Another specimen of *tāla dhvaja* has been preserved in the museum at Lucknow.[257]

The Purāna is acquainted with many epithets of Balarāma such as Rāma,[258] Baladeva,[259] Halāyudha[260] (armed with plough), Lāṅgalin,[261] Tala-Ketu,[262] Balabhadra,[263] Samkarsana,[264] etc.

He has been represented as a lover of wine.[265] He took wine in the garden of Raivata along with the illustrious and beautiful females.[266] He had also the wine cups which were broken by Dvivida a monkey-demon.[267] The *Mārkandeya Purāṇa*[268] also supports the wine drinking habit of Balarāma. The contemporary

sculptures of that period also represent him as holding wine cup in his one hand.[269] An image of Balarāma, discovered at Chhargaon, also holds a cup in his left hand.[270] Another image of Balarāma, dateable in the second or third century A.D. was discovered at Tuman in Gwalior region, here also he holds a cup in his one hand.[271]

The Purāṇa represents Balarāma as a lover of dice-play, and once he lost one thousand *niṣka* to king Rukmin.[272] The Purāna clearly shows other features of Balarāma. We have seen that his favourite weapons plough-share and pestle were important agricultural implements. It shows his love for agriculture. We may further note down that he was a lover of crops because he killed the monkey-demon Dvịvida who used to destroy the crops.[273] It is also essential to notice that even the 'Saṁkarṣana' which literally means the act of ploughing or furrowing,[274] clearly shows his association with agriculture.

In our Purāṇa, Balarāma, bears many features of snake-god, and he is associated with serpent. Balarāma is mentioned as an inscription of the serpent Śesa.[275] Once Akrūra beheld Balabhadra having thousand hooded heads.[276] Elsewhere in the Purāṇa we find that at the time of the departure of Balarāma from the earth, a serpent came out from his mouth.[277] It may be further pointed out that Śeṣanāga[278] and Balarāma[279] both hold plough and pestle as their weapons. The similarity of weapons of both divines further confirms our contention about the association of Nāga with Balarāma. The contemporary archaeological evidences also support our view. The earliest extant image of Balarāma, found near Mathurā, represents the god standing under a canopy of six serpent hoods, holding a pestle and a plough share in his hands.[280] Vogel[281] has observed, 'modern idols of Baladeva, manufactured in the Mathura region, are exact copies of the ancient Naga figures'. Other images of Balarāma of Kuṣāṇa period also bear the hoods of Nāga.[282]

The study of our Purāṇa further shows that the region of Mathurā appears to have been the stronghold of the cult of Balarāma. Most of his exploits, as mentioned in the Purāṇa, such as the dragging of the river Yamunā,[283] killing of the demons like Dhenuka,[284]

Pralamba[285] and Dvivida[286] are associated with this locality. His association with Mathurā is also evident from the fact that Kṛṣṇa, having once left Vraja for Dvārakā, never returned to that place, but Balarāma is said to have come back to dally with the cowherd and to take wine in Vṛndāvana.[287] The prevalence of the cult of Balarāma in Mathurā region can be corroborated by the fact that several images of this god have been discovered in that region.

*Pradyumna* :

Pradyumna, a third deity of Vyūha, is also found mentioned in the Purāṇa. He is represented as son of Kṛṣṇa.[288] He is said to have killed Sambāsura and latter's army.[289] Māyāvati was the wife of Pradyumna.[290]

*Aniruddha* :

Aniruddha was also one of the gods of Vyūha. The Purāṇa represents him as the son of Pradyumna.[291] He married Uṣā, the daughter of Bāṇāsura.[292] He was very handsom[293] and brave,[294] but he was made captive by Bāṇāsura. Later on, Kṛṣṇa killed Bāṇāsura and freed his grandson.[295]

*Viṣṇu* :

Now we shall direct our attention to Viṣṇu who is most important god in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. We have already seen that Viṣṇu was holding an important position in Vedic pantheon and held the same position in later age. In our Purāṇa, Viṣṇu is represented as the supreme God,[296] creator,[297] preserver and destructor.[298] He is mentioned as above all gods. Brahmā,[299] Śiva[300] and all other gods paid homage to him.

The Purāṇa describes him as having four hands[301] and lotus-eyes.[302] He wears yellow-garment so he is called *pītāmbara dhara*.[303] He wears different kinds of ornaments.[304] It is clear from the *Mahābhārata* that *kaustubha* came forth from the churning of the ocean and Viṣṇu took it.[305] On his breast he has a mark of *Śrīvatsa*.[306] His important weapons, as mentioned in the Purāṇa are Śaṁkha[307] (counch-

shell), Chakra[308] (discus), Gadā,[309] Śārṅga dhanuṣa[310] (a bow), Khaḍga[311] (sword) and arrow.[312] The *Mahābhārata*[313] is also acquainted with all these weapons of Viṣṇu.

Viṣṇu has been represented as most favourite god in the Purāṇa. Prahlāda,[314] Prachetas,[315] Dhruva[316] are stated to have prayed to this god. Viṣṇu made his appearance before his devotees and bestowed boon upon them and he always helped his devotees.

His *vāhana* or vehicle is Garuḍa which is a kind of bird.[317] He always travelled on this bird from one place to another. Kṛṣṇa, one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu, also used this vehicle.[318]

Viṣṇu has a flag having the sign of a Garuḍa so he is called as *Garuḍa-dhvaja.*[319] The Purāṇa mentions many terms for it, such as *Garuḍa-dhvaja,*[320] *suparṇarachita-dhvaja,*[321] *Uragāri ketana.*[322] The *Mahābhārata*[323] also speaks of this flag assigned to Viṣṇu. The existence of *Garuḍa dhvaja* can be corroborated by the Heliodorus inscription of Besnagar,[324] belonging to the Śuṅga age which refers to the *Garuḍa dhvaja* of Vāsudeva. The Bharhut[325] sculpture contains two pieces of evidence of the depiction of it. It is very difficult to say whether these *Garuḍa dhvajas* were of kings or of gods. But it is clear that the Garuḍa was represented as a symbol in flag in second century B.C. Later on the Vaiṣṇava Gupta kings depicted it on their coins.

Our Purāṇa also gives references to Lakṣmi as the consort of god Visnu. She is the wife of Visnu in various incarnations.[326] Furthermore, she is described as Visnu's *śakti.*[327] Her epithets, like *Viṣṇu Vakṣaḥ Sthitam*[328] (reclining on the breast of Viṣṇu) and *Padmanābhaṁpriya,*[329] also associate her with Visnu. In the *Mahābhārata,*[330] too, Śri or Laksmi is directly associated with Nārāyana—Viṣṇu. Often in the same epic[331] she is described as the wife of Visnu. The *Rāmāyaṇa*[332] and the *Amarkoṣa*[333] also refer to Laksmi as the wife of Viṣṇu.

Other details about this goddess can also be found in our Purana which refers to two different accounts of the origin of Laksmi. At one place in the Purāna it is mentioned that she was born by Bhṛgu on

Khyāti.[334] At another place the same Purāna says that as a result of the churning of the ocean there appeared Lakṣmī along with several things from the ocean.[335] The Purāna mentions both stories regarding the origin of Lakṣmī. It is difficult to suggest the reason for the two different accounts of her origin in the Purāṇa.

In the Purāna, Lakṣmī appears to have been associated with Indra as it is clear from the fact that Indra requested Lakṣmi not to abandon the former[336] and the world.[337] We are further told that after a long prayer,[338] done by Indra, Lakṣmī became pleased[339] with Indra and agreed to his request and assured him that she would not abandon Indra and the world too. The close association between the two can also be marked in the *Mahābhārata*[340] which refers to Lakṣmī as living in the palace of Indra along with Mahendrāni.

In our Purāna, Lakṣmī is associated with cattle, kine and other animals. She is requested by Indra not to give up cattle[341] and *goṣṭha*.[342] Her association with cattles and kine can be confirmed by the *Mahābhārata* where Lakṣmī[343] tells Indra that one of the reasons as to why she left the Asuras was that Asuras did not look after their cattle and neglected to offer them pasture grass and proper food. They indulged in meat-eating and killed the cattle not for sacrifices but to eat their flesh. At another place she speaks to Rukmini that she lives among those who honour the kine, brāhmaṇas and gods, and worship them with flower.[344]

Lakṣmī is also regarded as the goddess of fertility in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Her epithets, like *Jaganmātā*[345] (mother of world), Sarva-lokānāṁ-janani[346] (mother of whole world), etc., clearly show that she was recognised as the mother of whole world and as the goddess of fertility. The concept of Lakṣmi as a fertility goddess can be supported by the fact that she is associated with the lotus flower. In the opinion of Coomarswamy,[347] lotus is a symbol of water and it is connected with fertility. Her recognition as a fertility goddess is not a new thing in the Purāṇa. In the opinion of several German scholars[348] Śri was a fertility goddess of Pre-Aryan origion. This concept of Śri Lakṣmī can also be marked in the *Mahābhārata*.[349]

Another features of Lakṣmī can be marked in the Purāṇa where we are told that Indra-loka became deserted when she abandoned it and in the absence of her there was chaos and confusion and Asuras attacked the loka of Indra.[350] We are told that abandoned by Laksmi, the three worlds were on the brink of ruin, but they were again reanimated by her.[351] From her propitious gaze, men obtain wives, children, dwellings, friends, harvests and wealth.[352] Health and strength, power, victory, happiness are of easy of attainment to those upon she smiles.[353] Laksmi was also requested by Indra not to forsake his treasures, his granaries, his dwellings, his dependents, his persons, his wives, his children, his friends, his jewels,[354] etc. The Purāṇa also states that he on whom Lakṣmī's countenance is turned, is honourable, amiable, prosperous, wise and of exalted birth, a hero of irresistible prowess; but all his merits and his advantages are converted into worthlessness from whom she averts her face.[355] Thus the foregoing discussion clearly shows that Lakṣmī was regarded as the goddess of wealth, prosperity and fortune in the age of our Purāṇa.

The Purāṇa further represents her as a goddess of agriculture and farmers as it informs us that the people, with the propitious gaze obtain the harvests.[356] Furthermore, she is also requested not to abandon granaries, cowpen, etc. These facts clearly point out her association with agriculture and farmers. This is not a new feature of Lakṣmī as it is found in our Purāṇa. Gonda[357] holds that she is regarded as the guardian deity of the farmer since the Vedic age and onwards also.

Some Iconographical features of this goddess can also be marked in the Purāṇa. She has been described in the Purāṇa as residing on full-blown lotus.[358] The contemporary sculptures[359] depict Lakṣmī on the lotus. The Purāṇa further states that the sea of milk presented Lakṣmī with a wreath of unfading flowers and the artist of gods decorated her with lovely ornaments.[360] This shows that she is decorated with ornaments and garland. The early Buddhist sculptures[361] and the tribal[362] and foreigners[363] coins of ancient India also depict her with profused ornaments. Her description as holding lotus flower in

hands (*dhṛtapaṅkajā*,[364] *padmākara*,)[365] also finds depiction in some ancient Indian coins[366] and early Buddhist sculptures.[367]

We further read in the Purāṇa that as a result of the churning of the ocean, Lakṣmi appeared along with other things. Two elephants took up pure water in golden vessels, and poured them upon her.[368] It may be regarded as the description of the Gaja-Lakṣmī. The prevalence of the conception of Gaja-Lakṣmi can be attested to by the evidences of early Buddhist sculptures[369] where she has been depicted as Gaja-Lakṣmī. She appears in such form on some coins of early tribes[370] and of many alien rulers[371] of Northen India.

*The Conception of Avatāra*:

Other most important feature of Bhāgavatism in the Purāṇa is the conception of incarnations of Viṣṇu. We must note that the habit of thought which identifies one god with another is reflected in the Vedas though they had not arrived at the conception of the incarnation of god.[372] The names *Matsya, Kūmra, Varāha, Nṛsiṁha* and the Dwarf (*vāmana*) as the forms of the gods are well-mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas but here they are not excepting the dwarf, identified with Viṣṇu and are, on the other hand, identified with Brahmā, the creator.[373] The conception that a creator god appears in an animal form is certainly pre-epic.[374] Tortoise as a manifestation of Brahmā is mentioned in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the Matsya and the Boar manifestations first belonged to Brahmā. The Varāha incarnation is not of Viṣṇu but of Brahmā in the older *Rāmāyana* and the gods do not at first recognise the Varāha avatāra to Viṣṇu at all.[375] The *Mahābhārata* has no systematic records of the incarnations and even in the *Harivaṁśa* the list is not that of later ten.[376] The Great epic gives first a list of six avatāras and after a brief interval it mentions the ten incarnations of the god.[377] In the early portions of the *Rāmāyana*, Rāma is regarded as a great hero and not a god. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to the incarnations of Viṣṇu but they are not systematically mentioned at one place. Before discussing the different incarnations of Viṣṇu we must know the idea behind it. The main idea behind the incarnation

is to establish peace, law and order in society. Viṣṇu comes down to earth to destroy devils and to establish *dharma*.

*Matsyāvatāra* : The Purāṇa refers to it very briefly. It is to be pointed out that the Purāṇa, being a Vaiṣṇava work, does not mention Viṣṇu as having the form of fish, but it is Brahmā who took the form of fish.[378] Some early texts[379] also refer to fish incarnation taken by Brahmā. It seems that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, being an extant Purāṇa, refers to Brahmā as taking the form of fish. Besides, it should also be pointed out that this transfer of work from one deity to another is not a matter of much surprise as it is declared frequently that all the various gods are the form of one supreme being.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[380] and even other Purāṇas[381] also mention it as the first incarnation. The reason behind placing it as the first position in the list of incarnation is quite clear. It is generally believed that in the deluge whole universe was submerged into water. So the fish, the living being of water, might have appeared first. It cannot live on the earth. Its life is confined in the water.

*The Tortoise Incarnation* : The tortoise is frequently mentioned in the Vedic literatures[382] as a semi-divine animal. It is stated for the first time in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[383] that Brahmā, after assuming the form of *Kūrma* saved the earth. But in other texts, Viṣṇu took the form of *Kūrma* to recover some of the things of value lost in the deluge. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* very briefly mentions that at the time of churning of ocean Viṣṇu, taking the shape of a tortoise,[384] went to the bottom of the sea to serve as a support for the mountain Mandāra which was serving the purpose of churning staff in the *amṛta-manthana*.

The *Kūrma* incarnation is regarded as second in number in all incarnations as it comes after *Matsya*.[385]

*The Varāha Incarnation* : The Varāha is another incarnation of Viṣṇu. In the *Ṛgveda*[386] the boar was only related to the divinity but not to any incarnation. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[387] and the *Āraṇyakas*[388] the boar is mentioned only to have raised the earth but there is no reference to the conception of avatāra of any god. In some

early literary[389] sources the boar was regarded as the incarnation of Prajāpati but in the Purāṇa literature[390] we generally find that it was Viṣṇu who took the incarnation of boar. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[391] gives an exhaustive description of this incarnation of Viṣṇu. Here we find the transfer of the conception of boar incarnation from Brahmā to Viṣnu. In the Purāṇa, god Viṣṇu. In the Purāna, god Viṣṇu is regarded as a very popular and supreme deity, and hence it appears to be quite natural for the Purāṇakāra to associated this incarnation with god Viṣṇu.

The Purāna states that having adopted the form of a boar, Viṣṇu plunged into the ocean and uplifted the earth and raised it quietly to place in on the summit of the ocean.[392] It shows the close association between the boar and the earth. Its association with the earth clearly leads us to conclude that the boar might have been regarded as an agricultural deity. The *Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa*[393] supports this fact as it prescribes the worship of the varāha incarnation of Viṣṇu as a preliminary to agricultural operation.

We also find in the Purāṇa the description of the physical appearance of the divine Boar. The varāha is identified with the essential commodities and accessories of a sacrifice and the Purāna compares the body of the boar with the Nīla mountian.[394] The body of varāha is of the dark complexion of the lotus leaves.[395] The gurling sound of the throat of the boar is like the chanting of the *Sāma*-songs.[396] The *Matsya Purāṇa*[397] also compares the voice of the boar with the *Sāma*-songs. The comparison of its head[398] with Brahmā seems to be very apt, because Bhahmā is famous for his creative work. The mouth[399] of the boar is like the *chitis* (fire altars) which are constructed with bricks and have wide gaping mouth. So this comparison is also very appropriate. The two ears of the boar have been compared with two voluntary and obligatory rites,[400] i.e., *iṣṭa* and *smārta*, which are very essential for the performance of sacrifice. Its eyes[401] are compared with day and night. The teeth[402] have been compared with sacrifices which are many in number. So this comparison also seem to be justified. The tusk[403] of the boar is like an *yūpa*,

the sacrificial post. There is justification in holding this comparison because the long *yūpa* with its curved-top is similar to the projecting tusks of the boar.[404] The tongue of the boar like Agni. Agni is several times described as the tongue of gods with which they eat their food.[405] So this comparison is also very apt. The long snout of boar is like śruk which is a king of ladles for pouring oblation. It is bigger in size and projecting at one end. So the comparison of the two is very justified. Similarly, other parts of the boar have been compared with other accessories of the sacrifice. It is not essential to mention all of them.

*Nṛsiṁha Avatāra* : It is another incarnation of Viṣṇu. Some traces of the story of this incarnation can be found in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*;[406] but the Epics[407] and the Purāṇa[408] literature contain the story of the man-lion in great detail. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[409] is also acquainted with this incarnation. It is clear from our Purāṇa that Prahlāda, son of Hiranyakasipu, was a pious boy devoted to Viṣṇu. His father tried to discourage his pious inclination and inflicted on him cruel punishments but it was with no effect. The Purāna speaks that at last Prahlāda met his father and there was a complete reconciliation[410] between them. And only in a very cursory manner the Purāna alludes to the death of Hiraṇyakaśipu by Viṣṇu in the form of man-lion[411] and there is a clear reference to this incarnation who tore the heart of his enemy (i.e., Hiraṇyakaśipu) with nails.[412] This shows that our Purāna does not fully describe the killing of the demon by this incarnation.

*Dwarf Incarnation* : The traces of the story of *Vamāna* can be found in the Vedic literature[413] where the story is not well developed. The full story of dwarf incarnation is told in the epic mythology.[414] Our *Purāṇa* is also acquained with incarnation, but it only notices that Viṣṇu in the form of *trivikrama* strode the whole universe in three strides.[415] It does not give the whole story of this incarnation as we find in the other Purāṇas,[416] where Viṣṇu has been described as taking the dwarf-incarnation who crushed the pride of king Bali.

It may be suggested here that this incarnation represents the

shortman dwarf with human intelligence but he got the physical disability. He can not be regarded as a complete developed human being. He was more developed than an animal; he is in the developed stage than the man-lion incarnation. He also appears to have crossed the life of animal. After this stage, comes the developed stage of the incarnation of Paraśurāma.

*Paraśurāma* : (In early period Paraśurāma was not associated with the conception of incarnation. Rāma-Bhārgava or Jamadagneya does not seem to be known in the Vedic lore.[417] In the *Mahābhārata*, there is a story of Rāma-Jamadagneya more to less completely told in several passages but he is not associated with the incarnation of Viṣṇu).[418] In the Purāṇic literature,[419] Parasurāma is regarded as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* mentions that Jamadgni was his father and Reṇukā, of Ikṣvāku dynasty, was his mother.[420] Paraśurāma completely annihilated the whole kṣatriya caste[421] several times. His glory appears to have ended with the rise of Rāmachandra another incarnation of Viṣṇu. Our Purāṇa plainly but briefly refers to the destruction of the pride of Paraśurāma by Rāmachandra.[422] It is also essential to point out that our Purāna refers to Paraśurāma as a partial incarnation of Nārāyana,[423] i.e., Viṣṇu.

*Rāmāvatāra* : Rāmchandra is also regarded as one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu. The story of Rāma is told in the Epics[424] and the Purāṇas.[425] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also describes the expoits of Rāmchandra[426] and predecessors[427] and successors[428] in very brief.

Our Purāṇa refers to Rāma as a partial incarnation of Viṣṇu.[429] Though the Jātaka[430] refers to Rāma, it does not regard him as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Kane holds that Rāma was not worshipped as an incarnation of Viṣṇu several centuries before the birth of Christ. It should be mentioned here that Kālidāsa in fourth century A.D. mentions[431] the four sons of Daśaratha as partial incarnations of Viṣṇu. Hence it may be concluded that in the fourth century A.D. or even little earlier, Rāma was regarded as a partial incarnation of Viṣṇu. In short we may point out that Rāma was the human ideal of devotion, righteousness and manliness, the destructor of demon king Rāvaṇa, who oppressed and persecuted mankind.

The next in order is Kṛṣṇāvatāra. But this incarnation will not be dealt with again as we have already discussed it in detail.

*The Buddhāvatāra* : The incarnation of Buddha is mentioned in the early Brāhmaṇical texts. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* does not refer to this incarnation, though the Purāṇa gives ample light on the rise and fall of Buddhism. The Purāṇa vehemently criticises the principles of Buddhism. But some Purāṇas[432] regard Buddha as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

*The Kalki avatāra* : This incarnation, unlike those already described, has yet to be made; it is the expression of a hope that he, who so frequently visited the earth to restore order and happiness, will come again to inaugurate a reign of universal goodness, peace and prosperity. The *Mahābhārata*[433] is well acquainted with this incarnation. The purpose of this incarnation is clear in the Purāṇa[434] that at the close of the Kali age, Viṣṇu will be born in the family of Viṣṇuyaśa, an eminent brāhmaṇa of Sambal village and he will destroy all evils and will re-establish righteousness on earth. Other Purānas[435] also show their acquaintance with this incarnation.

*Purāṇic Gods and Goddesses* :

Our Purāṇa refers to several gods and goddessess. Some Vedic gods maintained their prominence at that time and many of them lost their vedic popularity.

The Vedic god Śiva retained his popularity in the epic[436] and the Purānic literature.[437] He has also been praised in our Purāna. He is mentioned by various names such as Śaṁkara,[438] Trilochana,[439] Vṛṣabhadhvaja,[440] Umāpati,[441] Sūlapāṇi[442] and so on. The Purāṇa enables us to know in great detail about his appearance, activities, weapons, etc. It represents him as having three eyes.[443] The contemporary sculptures of Bodha Gaya[444] and a few Kuṣāṇa-coins[445] also bear the testimony to the third eye of Śiva.

His association with moon[446] and Gaṅga,[447] his *jaṭā*,[448] and his weapon triśūla[449] have been mentioned in the Purāṇa. Śiva, with his *jaṭā* and a long spear in his one hand, has been depicted in the sculp-

ture of Bodha Gaya[450] and on some Kuṣāna[451]-coins. He is associated with bull as his epithet *Vṛṣabhadhvaja* suggests. Other Purānas[452] also take bull as a vehicle of Śiva. Śiva's association with bull can be marked on some coins of the Kuṣāṇas.[453] Several independent sculptures of Śiva with bull, belonging to the pre-Gupta age, have also been discovered.[454]

The Purāna mentions Umā,[455] the wife of Siva and his flag bearing the sign of a bull.[456] His most beloved city was Kāśi[457] which was protected by him. Śiva was always helped by his associates. Rudras[458] have been regarded as one of the associates of Śiva. It is important to note that in the Vedic and Gṛhya Sūtra literature, Rudras have been represented as destructive gods. But this aspect of Rudras is missing in our Purāṇa. The reason of the receding the darker aspect of this god is clear. It may be suggested that with the growth of religious sentiments, which exalted Śiva as a supreme god, this darker side of his nature began to recede though it was never wiped out. Rudras still bear some traces of the destructive nature of the Vedic age. Our Purāṇa represents the destructive powers of Rudras.[459] Viṣṇu is mentioned to have destroyed the earth in form of Rudra.[460]

His other associates are *Pramathagaṇa* and *Maheśvara jvara*. The term *Pramathagaṇa* means a class of being attending on Śiva.[461] They were a class of beings who always helped Śiva or his devotees against their enemies.[462] Their other features are not clear.

The *Maheśvara-jvara* or fever, as mentioned in the Purāna, fought with the *Vaiṣṇava*-fever. It helped Bānāsura against Kṛṣṇa,[463] but it was defeated by the latter. The *Maheśvara-jvara* had got three legs and three heads.[464] Our Purāna says that he who remembers this battle, becomes cure from fever. It may be suggested that it is only a king of belief and not a medicine. The religious belief behind it is only to show the lowest position of Śiva in relation to Kṛṣṇa. The *Maheśvara-jvara* may be taken as an associate of Śiva.

The *Kṛtyā* was another associate of Siva. It is believed that she was produced by Śiva when Kṛṣṇa attacked Kāśi.[465] The prince of Kāśi propitiated Śiva, and demanded a boon for a *Kṛtyā*. Śiva became

pleased, and he produced *Kṛtyā* in a female form, blazing with ruddy light. The *Kṛtyā* departed to Dvārakā, where the people, beholding her, fled for the protection to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is said to have destroyed all *Kṛtyās* with his discus.[466] It appears that *Kṛtyā* is a mythological female being who always helped the devotees of Śiva. She is also regarded as an attendant of Śiva. The *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* also makes *Kṛtyā* as Śiva's attendant. Apte[467] opines that *Kṛtyā* is a female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. Wilson[468] holds the view that *Kṛtyā* is a magical creation.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[469] mentioning the defeat of Śiva by Kṛṣṇa in a war, tries to show the lower position of Śiva. But Śiva was also highly regarded as a great divine by many people in society. The prevalence of Śaivism, in the pre-Gupta age, can be proved by some contemporary sources. Patañjali, in his *Mahābhāṣya*, mentions the *Śiva-bhāgavatas* and the worship of Śiva image.[470] Some of the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa rulers were Saivites. The Kuṣāṇa kings like Kadphises II (A.D. c. 78-110) Vasudeva (A.D. 182-220) were so staunch worshippers of Śiva that they had depicted the picture of Śiva on their coins. The prevalence of the Śiva-worship is further proved by the fact that in numerous cases the names of kings and people are found connected with that of Śiva.[471]

Brahmā occupied an important place in Hindu pantheon in subsequent poriods.[472] He also holds the important position in Purāṇic mythology.[473] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[474] speaks of the origin of Brahmā; he first evolved from the lotus springing from the navel of Viṣṇu for the purpose of creation. His epithet *Kamalodbhava* further supports the view of the origin from lotus. It may be suggested that such origin of Brahmā only indicates the inferior position of Brahmā in comparison to Viṣṇu.

Brahmā has been regarded as a supreme god, and all gods have been mentioned to have prayed him for his help.[475] He is also the creator of the universe, human beings, animals, gods, etc.[476] His epithet *Jagatsaṣṭā* further supports this view. His abode is called the Brahma-loka,[477] which is full of beautiful Apsarās and Gandharvas.

We get a vivid picture of the abode of Brahmā in the epic mythology[478] also.

Our Purāṇa is acquainted with his nine sons[479] and their wives. It also refers to the four faces of Brahmā one in each direction. The *Mahābhārata* also supports it. Some archaeological evidences, too, corroborate this fact. The stone image of Brahmā in the collection of the Mathura Museum (No. 382) shows the four-faced god with faces arranaged in peculiar manner.[480] Three of them are put in one line, the fourth one being placed over the central head. K.D. Bajpai refers to some Brahmā figures, having four of three bearded faces of the third-fourth centuries A.D.[481] Another four faced Brahmā, of Kuṣāṇa period, has also been discovered.[482] The statuette Nos. 2124, 2481 of Mathurā Museum also bear the figure of four faced Brahmā.[483]

Agni, another Vedic god,[484] occupies a secondary position in the epic[485] and Purāṇic[486] mythology. He lost his glory of the Vedic age and began to be regarded as the regent of a direction.[487] The cause of the decline of his status is not clear.

In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Agni has been represented as holding an inferior position to Kṛṣṇa as the former has been mentioned as being defeated by the latter in a battle. This also shows the supremacy of the Purāṇic god over an important Vedic god Agni. His important epithets are Hutāsana,[488] Pāvaka,[489] and Vahni.[490] He is mentioned as the eldest son of the creator Brahmā.[491] The Purāṇa further refers to the domestic sacrifices for which Agni is needed. This clearly shows the existence of the Agni-worship in the age of our Purāṇa. The existence of the sanctity of Agni can be corroborated by some contemporary coins of Pañchāla[492] series which bear the figure of Agni. There are several interesting images[493] of Agni belonging to the pre-Gupta age.

The Vedic god Indra appears as holding a secondry position in our Purāṇa. Indra is said to have been defeated by Kṛṣṇa,[494] Kaṁsa,[495] and even by Daityas.[496] Once Purañjaya, mounting on Indra's shoulder, faught against his enemies,[497] It is needless to multiply examples. All these examples show the low position of Indra in the Purāṇa.

The cause of the loss of his supreme position in the Purāṇic tradition is very difficult to explain. Such stories were fabricated in the Purāṇa only to show the supremacy of a Purāṇic god over an important Vedic god.

Indra is described in our Purāṇa as a lover of intoxication.[498] His love for wine can be traced in the Vedic[499] and epic[500] mythology also. He took keen interest in disturbing the penance of holymen by appointing celestial divine being for the same purpose. He tried to interrupt the penance of Dhruva[501] and of sage Kaṇḍu[502] by appointing celestial creatures.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* gives us information about his power of pouring rains. Once he tried to destroy Vraja by deluge of rain. People of Gokula worshipped Indra because he was regarded as the sovereign of clouds and of rains.[503] Due to the power of pouring the rain, Indra was, regarded as god of agriculturists.[504] His wife was Śachī or Indrāṇī[505] who always accompained him. His garden was Nandan-garden which was stocked with Pārijāta tree. Many gardeners had been appointed for the protection of this garden.[506] Indra is mentioned by various names[507] such as Śakra, Mahendra, Meghavāna, Vajrapāṇi, Śatakratu, Puraṁdara, Śachīpati, Sahasrasrākṣa and so on.

The Purāṇa is also acquainted with his weapon thunderbolt[508] and his favourite vehicle elephant.[509] Some early Buddhist sculptures represent Indra along with his weapon vrajra[510] and his vehicle elephant.[511]

Sūrya, who occupies an important place even in the Vedic mythology,[512] has been regarded as a popular god in the Purāṇic mythology. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* mentions that Sūrya married Saṁjñā, the daughter of Viśvakarmā. By Saṁjñā, he had two sons Manu and Yama, and a daughter Yami.[513] Sūrya is further mentioned to have begotten two sons and a daughter on Chhāyā, the sister of Saṁjñā.[514]

The Purāṇa, while referring to the physical appearance of Sūrya, says that once Sūrya appeared in his proper form and Śatrājit beheld him of a dwarfish statue with a body like burnised copper and with slightly raddish eyes.[515]

The conception of Sūrya in the form of a horse appears to have been mentioned in the Purāṇa. which informs us that once Sūrya in in the form of horse approached his wife Saṁjñā who was wandering in a forest in the form of a mare. At another place in the same Purāṇa we find that Yājñavalkyā prayed Sūrya and the latter, in the form of a horse, appeared to the former.[516] These instances clearly show the association of Sūrya with horse. The reason of this association is quite clear. It is a well-known fact that in the Vedic age[517] the Sun had been always represented as a horse. The epic mythology has also preserved the association between the two.[518] We may point out that same idea continued in the age of our Purāṇa.

Sūrya's conveyance is the chariot which is driven by seven horses.[519] This fact can also be marked in the early Buddhist sculpture. Sūrya with his chariot and two female attendants have been represented in the sculptures of Bhaja[520] and of Bodha Gaya.[521] The Sūrya on the chariot has been carved in Lala Bhagat sculpture.[522]

Many epithets[523] of Sūrya are such as Sāvitri, Bhāskara, Vivasvāna, Bhāsvata, Āditya and so on. We must notice the attendants of Sūrya. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says that the sage celebrates Sun's praise, the Gandharva sings, the nymph dances before him, the Rakṣasa attends upon his stemps, the serpent harness his stand, and the Yakṣa trims the rein, the numerous pigmy sages, the Bālakhilya ever surrounded his chariot.[524] Other attendants of Sūrya are called as twelve Ādityas and they are Dhātā, Āryaman, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, Vivasvān, Pusa, Viśvavasu, Aṁśa, Bhaga, Tvasta and Viṣṇu. An Āditya, a Ṛsi, a Gandharva, an Apsarā, a Yakṣa, a Sarpa, a Rākṣasa, always reside in sun's car in every month.[525]

Varuṇa, another great deity in the Vedic mythology,[526] appears as holding a low position[527] in the epics and Puranic literature. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also Varuṇa is not regarded as a great god as he is represented as a lokapāla of western direction.[528] Besides, it is mentioned that Varuṇa was defeated by Kṛṣṇa in a war.[529] The cause of showing the superiority of Kṛṣṇa over Varuṇa is obvious. It may be suggested that when the cult of Kṛṣṇa became popular then Kṛṣṇa

began to be represented as suppressing a well-known famous Vedic god. This story of the defeat of Varuṇa shows the prowess and valour of Kṛṣṇa over a prominent god of the Vedic mythology.

The wife of Varuṇa is Gauri;[530] but the *Mahābhārata*[531] mentions Vāruṇī as his wife. Other family members of Varuṇa are not mentioned in our Purana. We know Indra as a friend of Varuṇa. The friendship between these two gods can be traced in the Vedic[532] and epic[533] mythology.

Varuṇa, like other gods, was also pleased by his devotees. We are told in a story that in a story that an old brāhmaṇa named Ṛchika propitiated Varuṇa, the god of ocean, who gave him the thousand steeds, by means of which he was able to obtain the daughter of king Gādhi[534] in marriage.

The noose of Varuṇa, his weapon, whose antiquity goes to the Vedic age,[535] is mentioned in our Purāṇa.[536] The Purāṇa also mentions that Varuṇa was appointed to rule over the water.[537] He had an umbrella which had power to pour rain on earth, and it was santched away by Narakāsura.[538] His epithet *Salilarāja*[539] further supports his association with water. It is not a new idea in the Purāṇic tradition. The association of Varuṇa with water can be traced even in the vedic[540] and epic literature.[541]

Yama, another important god of the Vedic mythology,[542] is mentioned in the Purāṇa which refers to him as the king of justice and the monarch of the manes.[543] The *Mahābhārata* also says that he was appointed as the judge of the wicked and in this capacity he is called Dharmarāja.[544]

Yama is further mentioned as the protector of the south direction.[545] The region of hell has been assigned to him. The Purāṇa gives the names of different hells which are awful provinces of Yama, terrible with instruments of torture and fire.[546] We are further told in the Purāṇa, "all men at the end of their existence become slave to the power of Yama, by whom they are sentenced to painful punishment."[547] It also refers to the punishments given in hell by Yama but

this fact will be discussed later on.[548] His capital city is called Yamapura.[549] The conception of Yama as the lord of mortals can be found in the Saṁhitā literature[550] which refers that he is regarded as the lord of mortals. The Jātakas too regard him as the gate-keeper of hell[551] and the king of death.[552] But the detailed account of Yama is given in the *Mahābhārata*.[553]

His weapons are noose and *daṇḍa*.[554] Yama has also his servant called as *Yamakiṁkara*,[555] and *Yamadūta*,[556] i.e., the messenger of Yama to help him in his work. His servants also bear *pāsa* or noose in their hands. The conception of the messenger and servant of Yama can also be found in the epic mythology.[557]

Yama has been represented in our Purāṇa as under the control of Viṣṇu. He himself confessess that he is governed and controlled by Viṣṇu.[558] He always advises his servants not to touch the devotee of Viṣṇu.[559] He is lord of those who are not devotees of Viṣṇu.[560] These instances clearly show the superiority of Viṣṇu over Yama.

The Purāṇa is also acquainted with some members of Yama's family. His epithets Vaivasvata and Ravitanaya clearly show that he is son of Sūrya. Yama's wife is Dhumorṇa.[561] The epic literature also mentions the same name of his wife.[562] In our Purāṇa his epithets are such as Yama,[563] Dharmarāja,[564] Ravitanaya,[565] Vaivasvata.[566] The *Mahābhārata* is also replete with these epithets of this god.[567]

There is mention of various minor gods such as Kāmadeva,[568] Kārttikeya,[569] Kuvera,[570] Maruta,[571] Vāyu,[572] Viśvakarmā[573] and so on. These gods have not been described in great detail so it is needless to devote space on their description.

*Demi-divine Gods* :

The minor divine creatures in the Purāṇa are Apsarā, Gandharva, Garuḍa, Nāgas, etc. But the details of these divine beings are lacking in our Purāṇa.

*Apsarās* : The Apsarās, whose antiquity goes back to the Vedic age,[574] appear to be very prominent in the post-Vedic period. The

Jātakas[575] and epic literature[576] are well acquainted with them. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to different views regarding the origin of the Apsarās. At one place it mentions that the Apsarās were originated from Brahmā. At another place they are described as the daughters of Kaśyapa; and Muni was their mother. The third view is that the Apsarās came out from the churning of the ocean. The reasons for contradictory statements are not obvious. The origin of the Apsarās from the ocean clearly leads us to conclude that the Purāṇa is familiar with the association of Apsarā with water. The idea of the association of water with the Apsarās is not confined to the Purāṇic literature only; but its traces can be found in early literature also. In the Nirukta,[577] Yāska explains their name as 'moving in water' (*ap-saram*). In the *Rāmāyaṇa*[578] they are called essence of the water (*apsarā*).

The Purāṇa under review refers to the thousands of the Apsarās[579] but it enumerates the names of a few Apsaras such as Anumlochā,[580] Alambusā,[581] Grtāchi,[582] Kratusthalā,[583] Menakā, Purvachiti, Puñjikasthalā, Pramlochā, Rāmbhā, Sahajanyā Tilottamā, Urvaśī, Viśvāchi. The epics[584] and Purāṇic[585] mythology support the existence of many Apsaras. Apsarās were very beautiful young women and they were of surprising loveliness endowed with beauty and with taste.[586] By their beautiful postures and sweet words they robbed those who saw them.

It is further clear from the Purāṇa that they were generally appointed to disturb the penances of sages. They seduced the ascetics whose austerities might have endangered the supremacy of gods. The Apsarās like Pramlochā,[587] Urvaśi,[588] etc. were appointed to distract the mind of holy persons who were engaged in the performance of *tapa*. They are also called as the women of the gods (*surāṁganāḥ*) and the daughter of pleasure. Different Apsarās reside in Sūrya's chariot in different months.[589] Indra is also associated with the Apsarās.[590]

The Apsarās were also associated with dancing. They danced before Rākṣasas,[591] gods,[592] and godesses.[593] The epic literature[594] also

associates this quality with them. Some Buddhist sculptures of early period also depict them as dancing.[595]

The prevalence of the conception of the Apsarās can be supported by the sculptures[596] of first and second centuries B.C. They are shown as having slender waists, large gluteals and well developed bust. They are very pretty with a smiling countenance and adorned with many ornaments and draped with fine garments.

*Aśvins* : They were important gods in the Vedic age,[597] but they lost their importance in the epic age.[598] Even in the Purāṇic tradition they sank into low status. The reason of the loss of their importance seems to be clear that with the rise of the Vaiṣṇava cult some Vedic gods began to sink into low status. The same might have been the case with Aśvins. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* briefly refers to the Aśvins as the sons of Sūrya by Samjñā.[599] Aśvins have been mentioned as the fathers of Nakula and Sahadeva the two Pāṇḍavas.[600]

*The Chāraṇas* : They are other semi-divine beings mentioned in the Purāṇa.[601] Their feature can be explained with the help of the epic literature[602] which mentions that they admire heroes and sing their praises. It is generally believed that they are the celestial singers or heavenly chorister.[603]

*The Gandharvas* : They are regarded as another class of celestial beings whose antiquity can be traced in the Vedic age;[604] but their features do not appear to be well developed in that period. The conception of Gandharvas appears to be fully developed in the epics[605] and the Purāṇas.[606] In our Purāṇa, they are regarded as celestial beings and are described as a portion of Viṣṇu.[607] Their divinity can also be confirmed by the fact that they took birth from Brahmā.[608] They were associated with the Apsarās. They became successful in bringing back Urvaśī to heaven where she had been spending her time with king Purūravā since long time.[609] The association of the Gandharvas with the Apsarās can be corroborated by the epics[610] and Purāṇic tradition.[611]

Our Purāṇa represents them as best singers. They are described as born singing.[612] They also took pleasure in singing songs.[613] Several Purāṇas[614] and epics[615] also mention them as good divine singers.

Since the Vedic age,[616] the Gandharvas were in large number. Our Purāṇa also refers to them as sixty million in numbers.[617] A few Gandharvas, mentioned in the Purāṇa,[618] are Chitrasena, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Hāhā, Hūhū, Nārada, Mauneya, Susena, Sarvavarcha, Tumburu, Urṇāyu, Viśvavasu, Vasuruchi, etc. It is also clear from the Purāṇa that different Gandharvas reside in Sūrya's chariot in different months.[619]

Our Purāṇa does not give any light on the physical appearance of the Gandharvas. The exact idea about them can be found in the early Buddhist sculptures which depict them as flying human beings in air with garlands in their hands.[620]

*Garuḍa*: The Garuḍa, whose antiquity can be traced in the Vedic literature,[621] is another semi-divine creature of the Hindū mythology. Its feature was not clear in the Vedic age. But in the *Mahābhārata,*[622] its features appear to be clear. The Purāṇic mythology is also well acquainted with this celestial bird. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to the physical feature[623] of the Garuḍa that it has beak (*chañchva*), *tuṇḍa*, *pakṣa* (wings), *nakha* (nails). These descriptions clearly tend us to presume that it had the physical appearance of a bird. Even in the Vedic age[624] it was regarded as a bird. The Jātakas[625] and the *Mahā-bhārata*[626] also mention it as a bird having wing, beaks, etc. The vivid idea about this bird can be marked in the early Buddhist sculptures of Bharhut[627] and Sanchi[728] rails which represent the Garuda as a huge parrot[629] like bird. The sculptures of Mathurā[630] also bear the representation of Garuḍa like a parrot having pointed beaks, wings and claws. The most fantastic part of its body, however, is its tail which has received a curious twist. Sometimes Garuḍas have been represented with the head and wings of a bird and the body of human beings.[631] In the Gandhāra school of art the Garuḍa is also represented as a bird having beaks and wings.[632] In another sculpture the bird

has been shown in human form having wings.[633] The Garuḍa in the form of bird has been represented on the Gupta coins[634] also.

The Purāna refers to its many epithets such as Garuḍa,[635] Suparṇa,[636] Pannagāsana,[637] Pannagaripu, Uragāsana and Garutmān. It is clear from a story that its parents were Kaśyapa and Vinatā; and its brother was Aruna.[638]

The enemity between the snake and Garuḍa has also been recorded in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* Its epithets like Pannagāri, Uragāsana, clearly suggest that Garuḍa was the enemy of snake. Seeing the impression of Viṣṇu's feet on the brow of snake, the Garuḍa does not harm the serpent.[639] It is mentioned that once the Garuḍa tore the noose of Varuna into fragments with its beak as if it had been a little snake.[640] This simile clearly shows the enemity between the snake and the Garuḍa. Same fact can be found in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*[641] where we are told that the Garuḍa siezes serpent with its beak. Even the Jātakas[642] and epics,[643] too, bear the references to the rivalry between the two. Some sculptures of early christian era also attest to the prevalence of rivalry between these two. A sculpture from Mathurā shows that a parrot like Garuḍa, having well decorated and ornamented, seizes many headed serpents. Some sculptures of the Gandhara school of Art,[644] also represent Garuḍa as seizing Nāgin and Nāgas.[645] On a coping stone from Amarāvati, a Garuḍa has been represented as holding a five-headed Nāga in his beak.

*The Serpent* : The serpent has played an important role in the Hindū mythology in different periods of ancient Indian History.[646] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is not silent over the Nāgas. It refers to several words[647] such as Naga, Uraga, and Pannaga for the serpents. These are different versions regarding the origin of the serpent in the Purāṇa. At one place it is mentioned that they were the children of Surasā[648] and at another place they were children of Kadru.[649] But at another place our text narrates the origin of serpent from the hair of Brahmā.[650] We are not in a position to explain the contradictory statements regarding the origin of the serpents.

The Purāṇa under consideration knows several serpents[651] such

as Ahi, Apurṇa, Aśvatara, Dhanañjaya, Dhrtarāṣṭra, Elāpatra, Airāvata, Karkota, etc. The serpents like Kāliya, Vāsuki and Śeṣanāga have been mentioned in the Purāṇa in a great detail. Kālīya was a serpent king who had many heads and it, with several attendants, servents, dwelt in a deep pool of the Yamunā. Once it created panic in Mathurā on the bank of the Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa jumped into the pool and he overcame the serpent king. Kṛṣṇa did not kill him, but ordered Kāliya to free the earth from his presence and to remove to the ocean.[652]

Vāsuki, another principal Nāga, played a vital part in the churning of ocean. The serpent Vāsuki served the purpose of rope in the churning of ocean and helped the gods at that time of *amṛtamanthana*.[653]

We also get vivid description of Śeṣanāga in our Purāṇa which mentions that Śeṣa, as having thousand heads and his eyes, seems to be red with the intoxication. His body shines like a white mountain. He wears the blue garments and bears jewels on his heads. The diamond in his crests give light to all the region. He also wears *kīriṭa*, garland, white necklace, and single ear-ring.

Śeṣa has also been described in the Purāṇa as holding *hala* and pestle in his hands.[654] Other Purāṇas[655] also corroborate this fact. As Śeṣa is associated with these two agricultural weapons so it appears that he might have been regarded as an agricultural deity in ancient time.

It clear from our Purāṇa that Śeṣa is associated with many gods. It is mentioned that below the seven Pātālas is the form of Viṣṇu which is called Śeṣa. At another place god Viṣṇu is mentioned as sleeping on Śeṣanāga.[656] The association of Śeṣanāga with Viṣṇu can be marked in the epic mythology[657] also. Śeṣa is also associated with another god Balarāma who is regarded as the incarnation of Śeṣanāga.[658] The epic literature[659] also supports the association between these two divine beings. All these facts clearly show the divinity of Śeṣa. The divinity can be confirmed by the fact that Śeṣa is worshipped by sages[660] and gods.[661] We are also told in the Purāṇa

that once a sage Gārga, having propitiated Śeṣa, acquired a knowledge of the principle of astronomical science.[662]

The Purāṇa describes the Nāgaloka that there are beautiful palaces in it. Once, Nārada, after his return from the region to heaven declared amongst the celestial beings that Pātāla was much delightful than Heaven.[663] The Pātāla is full of beautiful gardens and streams and lakes and skies are resounded with cuckoo's song. The epic[664] another Purāṇas[665] also attest to the conception of Nāgaloka. A clear cut idea about Nāgaloka can be marked in the sculpture of Bharhut railing where it is carved as a highly triangular recess, in which a three headed serpent has been shown as seated on a lotus-throne.[666]

The physical appearance of the Nāgas can be marked in our Purāṇa which knows the different parts[667] of the body of the snake such as *danṣtra* (fangs), *maṇi* (jewels), *phaṇa* (hood), *hṛdaya* (heart), *tvachā* (skin) and coil.[668] The sculptures in the age of our Purāṇa help us in forming a correct idea about the physical appearance of Nāgas. The early Buddhist[669] sculptures depict Nāgas as having the upper half portion of human being and lower half of the coil of a snake. The males and females are well dressed and ornamented. In the Mathurā school of art of the Kuṣāṇa age, the Nāgas, in human forms are depicted exactly like Boddhisattava with the polycephalous serpents over the head of the former as a distinguishing feature.[670]

*The Vidyādharas* : The Vidyādharas, another divine beings, have not been discussed in great detail in our Purāṇa, but it refers to a few words for the consort of Vidyādhara such as Vidyādharī,[671] Vidyādharābadhū and Vidyādharāṅganā. The Vidyādhari appears in the Purāṇa as a celestial creature moving in air with a garland of flower in her hands.[672] The flowers for the garland were culled from the trees of heaven and the fragrant of which spread through the forest and enraptured all who dwelt beneath its shade. The Purāṇa describes the Vidyādharī as having full-eyed[673] and having graceful body. The contemporary sculptures[674] depict the figure of Vidyādharis as flaying in air with garland of flower in their hands. They are

always represented as a human being and adorned with many ornaments.

*The Yakṣas* : The Yakṣa, a divine creature, whose antiquity goes to the Vedic age,[675] holds an important position in the epic literature.[676] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also gives many interesting details about the Yakṣas. It refers to the origin of the Yakṣa that in the beginning of creation those who hastened to the deity (Brahmā) and cried out 'Let us eat' were named as Yakṣa[677] Yakṣa's origin from Brahmā has also been mentioned in the Purāṇa.[678] It is difficult to explain the two contradictory statements regarding the origin of Yakṣas.

The Purāṇa[679] knows many Yakṣas such as Ariṣṭanemi, Apurṇa, Rathabhṛta, Rathasvana, Rathachitra, Rathaja, Ritajīta, Satyajīta, Śrota, Senajīta and Tarkṣaya. All above mentioned Yakṣas are associated with the Sun's car. One Yakṣa resides in sun's chariot to trim the reins in each month.[680]

Many images of Yakṣa have been discovered at different places.[681] The Maṇibhadra Yakṣa appears to be a fine specimen of Yakṣa.[682] Many figures of Yakṣa have been depicted in the sculpture of Bharhut[683] railings. Several examples of Yakṣa images can be cited from the Kuṣāṇa[684] age also. All these images tend us to believe the divinity of Yakṣa in the pre-Gupta age.

*Antigods* :

Here we shall deal with the antigods as mentionedi n the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. As soon as we focus our attention on this topic one question rises in the mind : What is the difference between gods and antigods? It is very difficult to answer this question. There is no definite characteristic of the antigods. The picture of the antigods will become clear after comparing them to gods. The difference between gods (*Sura*) and antigods (*Asura*) is not one of kind but of degree. The gods appear luminous, angelic whereas antigods hamper the progress of individual and they seem obscure, lifeless, evil. We shall see just now that the antigods are all that draw man away from the road of realisation. They are those powerful instincts which prevent

the progress of man and obscure his intellect. It is also essential to point out that sometime it becomes very difficult to differentiate between the gods and antigods; because sometimes a few antigods help the man and act as gods; while some divinities seem to have been reduced to the status of antigods and put obstacle in the path of realisation. It can be clear with an instance of Dhruva in our Purāṇa, who practised penance for Visṇu. But Indra, being a god, tried to his best to distract the mind of Dhruva. It is thus clear that even gods also perform the works of antigods. Hence it is evident that the principles that all gods on a particular path of spiritual development may be demons on another. But gradually at each stage gods represent the beneficial powers of nature, while the antigods are antagonistic to enlightenment, the dark forces which seem to appear as cruel and destructive on the physical plane.

Another difference between the two is that the antigods seem to be older than the gods. They are the gods of that period when the world was still in its infancy. This point can be clear with some instances of different texts. According to one Upanisad[685] "the gods and antigods are the two-folds offspring of the Prajāpati. Of these the gods are the younger, the antigods the older." Our view can also be confirmed by the evidence of the *Rāmāyaṇa*[686] where it is mentioned that the earth with its forests, oceans, and mountains was first ruled by powerful genii (Daitya); but the gods, guided by knowledge (Viṣṇu) killed them in battle and captured the three worlds with their inhabitants.

The gods and antigods have been always represented as struggling with each other for the dominion of the worlds. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[687] and the *Rāmāyaṇa*[688] also refer to the struggle between the two. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[689] also shows its acquaintance with the struggle between Deva and Asura.

The study of the Purāṇa shows that the text is well acquainted with antigods such as Asuras, Bhūtas, Daityas, Piśāchas, Pretas and Rākṣasas and so on.

*The Asuras* : They were not regarded as the enemies of gods in the Vedic age;[690] but later on they became antigods and were con-

sidered as the rival of gods.[691] In the *Mahābhārata*,[692] Asura is the common name for all the antagonists of the *Suras*. The Purāṇic literature[693] is also acquainted with Asuras. It is mentioned that they were antigods and they fought with gods for *amṛta*.[694] The cause of the change of the nature of Asura in this period is not known.

The Purāṇa refers to their divine origin from Brahmā.[695] They were full of quality of darkness[696] and they were most powerful in the night.[697] Some of the Asuras were cruel, barbarous and uncivilized; but some Asuras like Narakāsura, Bāṇāsura were civilized. Some Asuras had palaces,[698] armies[699] and harem[700] also. They had also the power to transform into all sorts of shapes and to become invisible. They were of different shapes. We are told in the Purāṇa that Vṛṣabhāsura[701] had the appearance of bull and Dhenukāsura[702] was like an ass. They were meat-eaters as it is clear from the Purāṇa that Dhenukāsura used to take meat.[703] It is clear from the Purāṇa that they were quarrelsome, and they infringed the law, neglected the sacrifices and they were envious of the happiness of the Devas.

*The Bhūtas* : They are another demonaic beings in our Purāṇa. It is clear from the Purāṇa that Bhūtas were fierce and eaters of flesh.[704] The *Mahābhārata*[705] also refers to them as flesh eaters. Like other beings, they were also originated from Creator.[706] In the Bharhut sculpture, according to Barua,[707] there is a hideous figure of a being which may be taken as a figure of Bhūta.

*The Daityas and Dānavas* : The Daityas and Dānavas, as in the epic mythology,[708] were also evil spirits in the Purāṇic tradition.[709] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* makes some differences between these two devils. It appears from the Purāṇa that Dānavas[710] were children of Danu whereas Daityas[711] were born from Diti. But usually these names are used as synonyms.

It is clear from the Purāna that they were against the gods.[712] Hiranyakasipu,[713] a Daitya, is said to have defeated many gods. Many Daityas were against Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is said to have killed many Daityas like Mura, Hayagriva, Pañchajanya.[714] It is clear from the story of Hiranyakasipu[715] that he was ferocious and terrible.

*The Piśāchas* : The Pisachas appear as another group of antigods in the Vedic[716] and empic mythology.[717] The Purāṇic[718] tradition is also acquainted with them. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[719] preserves the same idea, and associates them with other evil spirits like Asuras, Rākṣasas, etc. The Purāṇa further refers to their divine origin from Brahmā.[720] They are also mentioned as the progeny of Kroddha.[721] It is difficult to co-ordinate these two contradictory statements. The Purāṇa further refers to the offering of *bali* to the Piśāchas.[722] Such offerings might have been given to the Piśāchas only to please them so that they may not put disturbance in daily life.

*The Pretas* : They are another antigods. In the Vedic literature[723] the word Preta is used to denote a 'deadman' but not in the sense of 'ghost'. But later on they began to be considered as evil spirits and ghosts.[724] In the epic literature the Preta is considered as evil spirit and ghost. The same idea continues in the Purāṇic literature[725] which considers it as a globin and wicked spirit. Our Purāṇa also refers to them alongwith other evil spirits. It also mentions the offering of *bali*[726] and *piṇḍa*[727] to the Pretas. It may be suggested that such provisions of the offering of *bali* and *piṇḍa* to them is made only to please the Pretas so that they may not put any hindrance in the daily life of people.

*The Rākṣasas* : Their antiquity goes back to the Vedic age[728] and they have been mentioned in our Purāṇa as evil doers and non-sacrificers. The Purāna[729] represents them as a disturbing element in the performance of the sacrifices. The Rākṣasas endeavoured to distract the mind of Dhruva[730] from his meditation; and by deceiving king Mitra Saha [731] they disturbed the performance of sacrifice. This was not a new feature of the Rākṣasas in the Purāṇic mythology but even in the Vedic age they were against the performance of the sacrifice.[732] The epic[733] literature also represents them as against the sacrifice.

Another point is to be noted down that Rākṣasas were the eater of human flesh and blood. Since Vedic age[734] they ate the flesh of men and horses. The epics[735] also refer to the Cannibal Rākṣasas.

The same idea is also found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which says that at the instigation of Viśvāmitra, a Rākṣasa devoured Parāśara's father.[736] At another story we are informed that king Mitra Saha, on becoming a Rākṣasa, devoured a brāhmaṇa.[737]

The Rākṣasas, since the Vedic age,[738] had the power to change their forms as they liked. Such idea about them is also found in the epic[739] and the Purāṇa literature. Our Purāṇa refers to the Rākṣasas who took the forms of dreadful animals before Dhruva who was performing penance.[740] It is mentioned in a story that when king Mitra Saha was performing a sacrifice, a Rākṣasa transformed himself into the form of Vasiṣṭha the priest of the former.[741] One Rākṣasa was in the form of a tiger. When he was killed he assumed the form of a Rākṣasa again.[742] So it is clear that the Rākṣasas had the power to transform themselves in any form as they liked.

Our Purāṇa refers to the origin of the Rākṣasas from Brahmā[743] At another place in the same text we are informed that Khāsā, the wife of Kaśyapa, gave birth to the Rākṣasas.[744] There is another interesting reference to the birth of the Rākṣasas from Brahmā in our Purāṇa.[745] It is very difficult to explain the causes of the conflicting statements about the origin of the Rākṣasas in our Purāṇa.

Our Purāṇa, like epic literature,[746] is also acquainted with many Rākṣasas by their names such as Virādha, Khara, Kabandha, Apa, Brahmaputa, Neti, Praheti, Pauruṣeya, Ratha, Sarpi, Sphurga, Vāta, Vyāghra, Vidyuta, Yajñopeta, etc. Several Rākṣasas have been associated with Sūrya and one Rākṣasa resides in Sūrya's chariot in each month.

The prevalence of the conception of Rākṣasa can be corroborated by the Junagadh inscription of Rudradāman which refers to the Rākṣasa.[747] On some coins, found at Taxila, there is a representation of a creature having head with short ears and protruded tongue.[748] It may be taken as the representation of Rākṣasas. The Rākṣasa with a heavy protruding belly, big head, has been depicted in the sculpture of Sanchi *toraṇa*.[749]

*Religious activities* :

We get references to some religious activities such as pilgrimage (*Tirtha yātrā*), fasting (*Upavāsa*), penance (*Tapa*), gifts (*Dāna*), religious bathes, feeding to the brāhmanas, listening and studying the sacred books, *Vrata* (festival), etc. in our Purāṇa but it barely refers to these religious activities.

*Pilgrimage* : The conception of the *Tīrtha* is found in the Vedic literature,[750] where it has got different meaning[751] but not in the sense of pilgrimage. But later on, the meaning of *Tīrtha* seems to be changed. By the time of the Sāmhitās[752] the *Tīrtha* stands for a holy place. Great emphasis has been laid on the *Tīrtha yātrā* in the epic[753] and the Purāṇic tradition. The *Skanda Purāṇa*[754] remarks that all holy places, sacrifices and various gifts are meant for cleaning the mind. But our Purāṇa does not devote many passages on *Tīrtha* as we find in other Purāṇas.[755] It mentions the visit of the different places on the earth.[756] It has got high respect for *Tīrthas*, and it advises the people not to void urine at holy places. It does not mention the details of pilgrimage. The contemporary epigraph[757] also supports the existence of visiting the pilgrimage in that age.

It may be mentioned that there are certain idea behind the *Tīrtha yātrā*. The Indian society was broken up into numerous castes, and suffered from caste exclusiveness. So it may be suggested that the pilgrimage tended to level up all men by bringing them together to some holy places. Secondly, pilgrimage supplied much enthusiasm to draw ordinary men away from selfish pursuits, and to make them think of the higher and more enduring moral and spiritual values.

*Upavāsa*[758] : It means total abstinence from food and drink, but generally it means light diet restricted in quality and also as regards the nature of the articles taken.[759] Rules regarding *Upavāsa* have been framed in the Samhitas[760] and other ancient texts.[761] *Upavāsa* has also great importance in the epic[762] and the Purāṇic literature.[763] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* simply mentions the performance of fasting at Mathurā on the *Dvādaśī* or *Śuklapakṣa* of *Jyeṣtha*[764] (on the twelfth lunation of the light fortnight of the month of *Jyeṣtha*). It also refers to the

fasting at the holy place like Prayāga, Puṣkara Kurukṣetra.[765] The fasting on the full moon day of the *Kārtika* month was also considered as of great religious value.[766] Other details of fasting are not mentioned in our Purāṇa.

The main idea behind fasting, we may suggest, is to preserve and to maintain the health. Thus it appears that for this reason religious colour has been given to the act of fasting. Secondly, fasting would have infused the religious sentiment into the society.

*Dāna* : It is another religious activity as mentioned in our Purāṇa. We have already dealt with it.

*Giving of Alms* : The alms-giving is also considered as a religious activity in the Hindu society since long time.[767] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* lays much emphasis on the three alms, i.e., alms offering to the gods, the guests and to the brāhmaṇas.[768] It makes the offering of alms compulsory for a householder.[769] We are also informed that a householder is to give a religious student three handful of rice or according to his pleasure when he has ample means. The whole burden of alms-giving has been loaded on the *Gṛhastha*. The sociological reason behind it seems to be obvious. The householder was regarded as the supporter of all followers of *Aśramas*.[770] So he had to support them all. He could support a brahmachārī and a somnyasī by giving alms to them. The act of giving alms can be supported by other literary evidences.[771]

*Tapas* : The performance of *Tapas* was a means to please the gods. Its antiquity goes back to the Vedic age,[772] and it is mentioned in the epic literature.[773] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* bears several interesting references to *Tapas* performed by Dhruva[774] and by Prachetas.[775] Some kings like Agnidhra, Ṛṣabha, Raivanta, also performed penances. Sages like Kaṇḍu,[776] Aṣṭāvakra,[777] are also mentioned as performing penances. All Pāṇḍavas, on the advice of Vyāsa, retired to a forest for the performance of penance.[778] The Purāṇa further prescribes the performance to *Tapas* for the followers of the *Vānaprasthāśrama*.[779] We are told in the Purāṇa that the performance of hard penances always alarmed the gods. Gods also tried to distract the mind of the performer of penances. In some cases gods appointed the Apsarās[780]

and other semi-divine[781] and Rākṣasas to disturb the penances. Sometimes the performer of the penance could get complete victory over all disturbing elements, and sometimes some persons could not complete their penance due to the disturbances. They, who could complete their penances, were able to see their desiring gods; and could get boons from them. The penances were performed with some desire, i.e. either for getting the place of Indra[782] or of Sūrya,[783] or of Dhaneśa,[784] or to please gods like Viṣṇu, Śiva, etc. It shows that there was an idea for the achievement of a goal behind the performance of penance. The details of penances are not mentioned in our Purāṇa.

*Feeding the Brāhmaṇas* : The feeding to the brahmanas was another kind of religious deed in ancient India.[785] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* makes a few references to feeding the brāhmaṇas. It mentions the feeding the brāhmaṇas during the *śrāddha* ceremony.[786] The Purāṇa says that according to his capacity one should offer food to the brāhmaṇas during the *śrāddha* time.[787] A few selected brāhmaṇas, who were well versed in the Vedas and śastras, were only entitled to be fed during the *śrāddha* time.[788] A householder has also been advised by the Purāṇa to feed the Pāñchayajñika and Srotriya brāhmaṇas.[789] There is also a provision to feeding the brāhmaṇas during the *Jātakarma Saṁskāra*.[790] The Purāṇa further says that the feeding to the brāhmaṇas during the time of mourning will satisfy the soul of the defunct.[791] The Gopas, as it is clear from the text, offered food to the brāhmaṇas at the time of the worship of Govardhana. It can also be corroborated by the epigraphic records. The inscriptions[792] of the time of Nahapāna refer to the feeding to the brāhmaṇas. The records of the Kuṣāṇa age also speak of it. The Mathurā stone inscription[793] of the time of Huviṣka also refers to the offering of food to the brāhmaṇas.

*Taking of the name of Hari* : The chanting of the name of Hari or remembering Him is also a religious deed. The Purāṇic tradition proposes it as an easy for all for removing all sins. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* lays much emphasis on the rememberance of Hari and Kṛṣṇa. It says "of all the expiation (for sins declared by the sages) such as Tapas and other action, the meditation on Kṛṣṇa is the highest. If a man

remembers Nārāyana in the morning, at night, at twilight, at mid-day, and the light, he at once secures the removal of sins."[794] It further ordains that those who contemplate upon the *mantra* of twelve letters do not return to the cycle of birth and deaths.[795] Viṣṇu has been regarded as the liberator of bondage, so liberation is only due to the rememberance of the name of Kṛṣṇa.[796] All sufferings vanish away with the recollection of Viṣṇu.[797] The Purāṇa also devotes many passages to the importance of the taking of the name of Hari or Kṛṣṇa.[798] It is clear from the Purāṇa that whole heap of worldly sorrows is dispersed by meditating on Hari and his worshipper, looking upon heavenly fruition as an impediment to felicity, obtain final emancipation.[799] The *Kīrtana* or praise of Kṛṣṇa also seems to be regarded as another religious activity. Our Purāna also lays emphasis on the *Kīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa.[800] It says that with the *Kīrtana* of Hari all sins vanish away.[801] Other Purāṇas[802] also refer to the importance of taking the name of Hari.

We may suggest that the idea behind the recollection of the name of Hari or Kṛṣṇa is only to show the greatness of Kṛṣṇa. The recollection of the name of Viṣṇu has a magic power to destrory all sins. We may suggest that only to attract the mind of general people towards the cult of Kṛṣṇa such religious colour has been added to it. We have seen that the cult of Kṛṣṇa was getting rise during the period between first century B.C. to early fourth century A.D. It seems probable that due to the rise of the cult of Kṛṣṇa such importance has been attached to the recollection of the name of Kṛṣṇa or Hari.

*Religious Bath* : The religious bath occupies an important position in Hindū religion. The taking of religious bath has been recorded as a religious deed even in the Vedic literature.[803] The merit of religious bath continued in later period also. The *Mahābhārata*[804] and the Purāṇic tradition[805] are well acquainted with the religious baths at different holy places. Our Purāṇa, too, speaks of the holy bath at *tīrtha* and in several rivers. It is clear from the Purāṇa that the holy baths at some *tīrthas*[806] such as Prayāga, Mathurā, Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and the religious deep into the rivers, like the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā, the Sarasvatī, Vipāśā and Śatadrū, cleanse all sins. We may

suggest that the emphasis on the religious bath in different holy places and in different rivers has been given only to keep alive the idea of religious sentiment in the heart of people.

*Hearing and Reading of Sacred Texts* : Another religious activity was the listening and reading of sacred text. Our Purāṇa devotes passages on the importance of reading sacred books. It advises the householders to read sacred books after taking their meal.[807] It also states about the merits of listening[808] and reading[809] the whole or the parts of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* The reading and listening of some portions of the Purāṇa are also regarded as of a great value. The Purāṇa says that the listening of the first Aṁśa of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* expiates all offences.[810] The man who hears this Purāṇa obtains the fruits of bathing in the Puṣkara lake for 12 years in the month of Kārttika.[811] The stories of Prahlāda,[812] Pṛthu,[813] the tale of Bharata,[814] the deeds of sage Saubhari,[815] account of the Ikṣvāku family and of Yadu dynasty, as narrated in the Purāṇa, are of great religious importance, and the Purāṇa lays emphasis on hearing these stories.

Thus it is clear that religious idea has been attached to the hearing or listening of the whole or the part of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa.* We may point out that the deeds of Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu have been praised in the Purāṇa. So in order to keep alive the importance and glory of Kṛṣṇa, such emphasis has been given to the reading and hearing of the Purāṇa under consideration. Secondly, it may be pointed out that the Purāṇa, as a sacred text for general people, has preserved rules and regulations of all castes and it gives a lot of information regarding cultural life. The reading and hearing of the Purāṇa might have kept the lamp of religious sentiment burning in the society. The Purāṇic literature is the record of Indian culture. So without reading and hearing the Purāṇa it is not possible to know about culture. To show the importance of the Purāṇa the religious ideas have been attached to reading and listening of the text.

## *Sacred Rivers, Trees, and Animals* :

*Sacred Rivers* : The sanctity of water and river can be found since the Vedic age.[816] The epic literature[817] is also full of the eulogies

of the sacred rivers. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, too, some rivers are regarded as sacred and they are the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā, the Sarasvatī, the Śatadrū, the Vipāśā and the Narmadā. It devotes many passages on the praises of the Gaṅgā.[818] It is mentioned that the Gaṅgā descended on the earth by the efforts of king Sagara and his descendants.[819] We read in the Purāṇa that the bath of the Gaṅgā confesses heaven upon all who bath in it designedly or whenever become accidently immerged in it; those even shall obtain *Svarga*, whose bones, skins, fibres, hair or any other part, shall be left after death upon the earth which is contiguous to the Ganga.[820] With the bath in this river all sins vanish away[821] and the offences of any man, who bathes in this river, are immediately expiated, and unprecedented virtue is engendered. Its water, offered by sons to their ancestors in faith for three years, yields to the latter rarely attainable glorification. Men of the twice born-orders, who offer sacrifice in this river to Viṣṇu, obtain whatever they desire, either here or in heaven. Saints, who are purified from all soil by bathing in its waters, and whose minds are intent on Keśava, acquire thereby final liberation. This sacred stream, heard of, desired, seen, touched, bathed in or hymned day by day, sanctifies all beings, and those who even at a distance of a hundred yojanas exclaim, "Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā" atone for the sins committed during three previous lives.[822] The sanctity of the Gaṅgā can be corroborated by the evidence of other Purāṇas.[823] The Greek geographer Strabo[824] also speaks of the sanctity of this river.

The Purāṇa also speaks of the sacredness of the Sarasvatī which also cleanses all sins of a man who bathes in it. The sacredness of this river can also be confirmed by the epic literature.[825]

The Yamunā, a sacred river from the Vedic age,[826] has been glorified in our Purāṇa which lays much emphasis on the bath in this river in Jyeṣṭha month.[827] It is mentioned that the bath in the Yamunā destroys all sins.[828] The sacredness of this river can be supported by the evidences of the epic literature.

The Narmadā, another sacred river, has also been glorified in our Purāṇa but not like the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā. The Purāṇa

speaks that the Narmadā helped serpent against the Gandharavas.[829] The *Matsya Purāṇa* also puts the comparative holiness of several rivers thus "the waters of the Sarasvatī purify after (the bath for) three days, those of the Yamunā in seven days, those of the Gaṅgā at once while the water of the Narmadā purifies a man at a single sight of it."[830]

It may be pointed out that though the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to several rivers,[831] it attaches religious importance to a few rivers. The above mentioned rivers have been regarded as the sacred river since ancient times; so the Purāṇa seems to maintain the sanctity of these rivers.

*Sacred Trees* : The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also contains references to a few trees of religious importance but the text does not not refer to the worship of trees clearly.

*Chaitya-tree* : The Purāṇa advises the householders to pay respect to Chaitya tree.[832] The epic literature[833] also supports the sacredness of the Chaitya tree.

*Kalpa-vṛksa* : It is another sacred tree in ancient India. The detailed account of this sacred tree can be found in the epic mytho-logy[834] and the Purāṇic tradition.[835] The conception of its sacredness has also been preserved in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which refers to peculiar mythology attached to this tree. We are told in the Purāṇa that at the time of the churning of ocean this celestial tree sprang from the whirl pool of the deep.[836] It was first given to Indra, and later on, it was planted in the garden of Indra by Śachī, Indra's wife.[837] The epic literature also attests to the origin of Pārijāta tree from ocean.[838] It shows that it has divine origin. It seems that such mythology has been attached to it only to give a religious colour to it. Its associa-tion with Gods can be further attested by the evidences of other passeges of the Purāṇa which refer to the battle between Kṛṣṇa and Indra for this tree. In that war the latter was defeated by the former who brought this tree to Dvārakā to replant it there.[839] The epic mythology also conforms this event.[840] It shows that gods were hankering after the lust of this tree. The departure of this tree from

Dvārakā to heaven is also mentioned in the Purāṇa that on the same day Kṛṣṇa departed from the earth and this tree, which had been brought to earth by Kṛṣṇa, proceeded to heaven.[841]

It is clear from the Purāṇa that the Pārijāta tree was not the property of an individual. It is mentioned in the Purāṇa that Satyabhāma[842] informed the garden that Indra had no keeper of the right to possess this tree alone, and as it was produced during the time of the churning of the ocean so it was common property of all. We further read in the Purāṇa that as nectar, as the moon, as the goddes Śrī herself, so the Pārijāta tree is common property of all the world.[843]

A full description of this tree is also found in the Purāṇa under consideration that the Pārijāta tree perfumed the world with its blossom[844] and the tree had the bark of gold and it was embellished with sprouting leaves of a copper colour and fruit stalks bearing numerous clusters of fragrant fruit.[845] Its smell perfumed the earth for three furlongs, and an approach to which enabled every one to recollect the events of a prior existence.[846] It is also mentioncd that when this tree was replanted in Dvārakā, on beholding their faces in that tree, all the Yādavas contemplated themselves in their celestial forms.[847]

According to the Purāṇa the idea behind the Kalpavṛksa is that it is the king for desired things.[848] It is clear that there was a notion that the people got all what they wanted from this tree. It shows its peculiar power to fulfil the desire of all living being.

Different names of this tree are Kalpavṛksa,[849] Pārijāta,[850] Nandanataru[851] as mentioned in the Purāṇa. The existence of the idea of the Kalpavṛksa can be confirmed by the sculptures of Bharhut Stūpa[852] which bear the depiction of the Kalpavṛksa. The tree is also represented in the sculpture of Sanchi Stupa as a highly conventional mango tree but may possibly be meant for the Kalpadruma.[853] One another specimen of this tree is discovered by Cunningham,[854] who had published a very curious sculptured capital of this tree, which gives a quite different representation of it. This capital, which is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, was found on the bank of the Betwa

river in Malawa, a short distance below Besnagar. The tree is represented as a Banyan with long pendent root from which untold wealth, in the shape of square pieces of money, is dropping in such qualities that all the vessels placed below are full of overflowing. The upper part of the tree is spherical in shape which is covered with leaves. It has pendent foot and cylindrical neck. A.K. Coomarswamy has assigned it to the Mauryan age,[855] but the crude representation of tree leads us to suppose that it belongs to the age later than the Mauryan age. It may probably be assigned to Śuṅga age.

*Aśvattha* : The Aśvattha, another sacred tree since the vedic age,[856] is mentioned in the Purāṇa.[857] Other Purāṇas[858] also attest to its sanctity. Some early Buddhist[859] sculptures bear the representation of this tree. It may be taken as the same as Bodhi tree of the Buddhist literature.[860]

Thus we have seen that a few trees were regarded as sacred in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* but it does not give the reason of its sacredness. It may be here suggested that the trees were considered as sacred in past only due to the fact that the trees had wonderful utility in daily life. Their shade is grateful in a hot climate. Their wood is the source of fire itself a god. Their fruits, juices and bark are articles of food and have well known medicinal and curative properties. The leaves of trees also supply many needs among others rooting and thatch for houses.

*Sacred Animals* : The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* refers to a few sacred animals. The cow is a sacred animal in the Vedic[861] and the epic literature.[862] The conception of its sacredness is also found in our Purāṇa which refers to the performance of the cow-worship by the inhabitants of Vraja.[863] Somewhere else the Purāṇa advises the householders to perform the worship of cow daily.[864] It was believed that cows were fed with great respect for the welfare of *Pitṛgaṇa.*[865] The cow was regarded as a goddess of the Yādavas.[866]

The Purāṇa is against the slaughter of the cow. According to the Purāṇa the slaughterer of cow goes to Rodha hell.[867] The *Rāmāyaṇa* also condemns the slaughter of cow.[868] This shows that

the cows were protected and respected in society in ancient time. What are the reasons behind the showing of respect to cow in the age of our Purāṇa ? The reasons are quite obvious. It is clear that Kṛṣṇa was associated with the cows.[869] So we may suggest that with the rise of the cult of Kṛṣṇa the showing of respect to cows was natural. The Purāṣakāra has given the religious tinge to cows. Due to religious sentiment people would have venerated cows. It may be further suggested that the cow also appears to be useful in the performance of rituals and worships. The Pañchagāvya, prepared from the five substances due to the cows,[870] has been regarded as the purification for many lapses.[871] Cow is profoundly grateful for the service she renders to people. Cakes of cow-dung, mixed with mud, are the universal fuel. Her milk is also useful for people. Thus due to these reasons people would have paid respect to cow in the age of our purāṇa.

Our Purāṇa mentions the different sacred cows such as Surabhi,[872] Kāmadhenu,[873] and Dharmadhenu.[874] Regarding the Surabhi, the Purāṇa says that she appeared from the churning of the ocean.[875] She has been mentioned as worshipped by divine-beings (*Surapūjitā*). The *Mahābhārata*[876] and several Purāṇas[877] also throw ample light on this cow. Kāmadhenu might have been its another name. It was generally believed that Kāmadhenu (wishing cow) by milking of which all desires were fulfilled.[878]

Another cow, mentioned in the Purāṇa, is Dharmadhenu.[879] The Purāṇa does not explain the purpose of this cow. The commentator of the Purāṇa explains the term as a cow yielding milk for holy purposes, or for the butter which is poured in oblation upon the sacrificial fire.[880] So it is mentioned as the cow of righteausness. It is also clear from the Purāṇa that the killing of this cow was a kind of sin and the killer had to perform Prāyaśchita[881] at once.

*Bull* : Bull was another sacred animal in ancient times.[882] The epic literature[883] is also replete with the reference to it. Our Purāṇa also regards bull as a sacred animal which was worshipped by the people of Vraja.[884] It also mentions the letting loose of a blue for the welfare of Pitṛgaṇa.[885] It has also been associated with Śiva[886] as it is clear from Śiva's epithet Vṛṣabhadhvaja.[887]

The sacrednes of bull can be attested by some contemporary archaeological sources. The bull, as a mark of respect, has been depicted on the Punch marked coins and on other coins of ancient India.[888] The prevalence of its sanctity also continued in the age of the Bhāraśiva dynasty.[889] The reasons of its sacredness are clear. It may be suggested that the bulls had been always helpful in the agricultural operations since early time. For this reason the religious sentiment seems to have been attached to it.

*Pāpa (Sin)*

The idea of sin varies from religion to religion, from age to age and from country to country.[890] The conception of sin has also played an important role in Hindū religion.[891] It can be traced as early as the Vedic age.[892] The sages of the *Ṛgveda* were actually conscious of sin or guilt and pray to the gods particularly to Varuṇa and Āditya, for forgiveness and for being freed upon the consequences of sin.[893] Other Vedic texts[894] are also acquainted with the *pāpa* (sin). The enumeration of sinful acts and the classification of sin into several degrees or grades can also be found in the vedic texts.[895]

The conception of sin can also be found in the Purāṇa which gives the information regarding many sinful acts which lead to hell.[896] There are many sinful acts in the Purāṇa but it is difficult to enlist them all. A few grave sins, mentioned in the Purāṇa, are as follows :

*Brahmahatyā (killing of brāhmaṇas)* : Our Purāṇa, like other ancient texts,[897] is well acquainted with this sinful act and it prescribes a hell for them who commit murder of the brāhmaṇas.[898] The brāhmaṇas were regarded as a privileged class and they had got upper hand in society of ancient period. So in order to protect the life of the brāhmaṇas, the Brahmahatyā was highly condemned. The reason behind it was to safeguard the life of a brāhmaṇa.

*Drinking of wine or Surā* : The drinking of Surā was also a sin in ancient India and it has been highly condemned by several ancient texts.[899] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* too contains the idea of hate for the wine-drinking and it prescribes a hell for wine-drinker.[900] The Purāṇa is

also not in favour of inviting a dealer of Surā in the *śrāddha* ceremony.[901] But generally the wine drinking was highly condemned in society. This fact can be attested to by some smṛtis[902] which also regard taking of wine as a sinful act.

*Theft* : The commitment of theft was also regarded as a sin in ancient society.[903] Our Purāṇa,[904] like other ancient texts,[905] regards the theft of gold as a sinful act. It prescribes a hell for the theft of gold.[906] The Smṛtis[907] also attest to this fact. It may be suggested that this rule was framed only to protect the gold, i.e., the wealth of the king or state. The theft of the wealth of a brāhmaṇa was also regarded as a kind of sin. It was only to protect the wealth of the brāhmaṇas in the society. The Purāṇa prescribes a hell for all thieves.[908]

*Violating the Guru's bed* : It was also considered as a sin in ancient India.[909] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, like other ancient texts,[910] regards it as a sinful act. It prescribes a hell for the sinner.[911] It may be pointed out that some texts take *Guru* as father[912] and some as teacher.[913] But in our Purāṇa the word '*Guru*' has been used in the sense of a teacher. So it is clear that the sexual intercourse with the wife of a *guru* has been highly condemned in the Purāṇa. The smṛtis[914] are also against this sinful act.

*Killing of the Bhrūṇa* : It was another kind of sin. According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* a destroyer of a bhrūṇa is to be punished in a hell.[915] The conception of such sinful act can also be found in other ancient texts.[916] It may be suggested that the idea behind it was to check the illicit connection which might have caused the moral degradation in the society. It may be further added that the health consideration also seems to be another reason behind it. The forceful killing of foetus, might have caused ill health to another. So the ban of the destruction of *bhrūṇa* was essential and hence it was declared as a sin.

There are many other sinful acts which lead the doers of such acts to hell. Many ancient texts refer to many sins. Yājñavalkya[917] mentions only 18 *upapātakas*. The longest list of sinners is mentioned

in the *Manu Smṛti*.[918] The *Agni Purāṇa* also refers to many *upapātakas*. It is not an easy task to explain all these sins fully. The sinful acts, mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[919] are such as forsaking the sacred fires, offending the teacher, selling of Soma, killing of kine, neglecting the Vedic study, the reviling of the Vedas, selling what ought not to be sold, learning the Veda from a paid teacher, teaching of Veda for salary, killing of a woman, killing of ksatriya, vaisya, and of animals, taming of certain animals, sexual cohibition with prohibited female, etc.

*Heaven*

The conception of heaven also played an important role in Hindū mythology. The idea of *Svarga* can be traced even in the vedic texts.[920] The *Ṛgveda* mentions that life in heaven is full of joys and delights and the denizen of heaven has all his desires fulfilled.[921] The *Atharvaveda* contains much more information about heaven.[922] The Jātakas[923] and epic literature[924] are also replete with many details of the conception of heaven. Our Purāṇa does not give the detailed description of the pleasure of heaven. It only says that heaven (or *svarga*) is that which delights the mind.[925] The Purāṇa refers to many *lokas* as the abode of gods. Following are the *lokas* mentioned in the Purāṇa :—

The region of Prajāpati[926] has been assigned to the brāhmaṇas and householders for the performance of their respective duties. Another is the abode of Indra (i.e. Indrasthāna) which is attended by troops of Apsarās and Gandharvas. This *loka* has been assigned to the kṣatriyas who do not fly from the battle-field.[927] It may be presumed that the main idea behind it is only to encourage the ksatriyas in the battle-field. The *Marutasthāna* (abode of Vāyu) is for those vaiśyas who follow their own duties.[928] The *Gandharva loka* (the abode of Gandharva) is for a śūdra who does his duties.[929] The region of 88,000 saints has been assigned to the students who reside at Guru's residence.[930] The abode for *saptarṣi* is for the *Vānaprastha* people.[931] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is also acquainted with the abode of Nāgas.[932] But we have already discussed it so it is not necessary to discuss it again. The abode of Brahmā has been assigned to *Saṁnyāsi*[933] in the Purāṇa.

Thus it is clear that our Purāṇa contains passing references to different heavens assigned to different gods. We find that different heavens have been assigned to different castes and the followers of different *āśramas*. The main idea behind such provision seems to encourage people to follow the rules and regulation *varnāśrama dharma.* It may be pointed out that prevalence of the conception of heaven can be corroborated by the Garha stone inscription of Rudra Sena-I,[934] dated Śaka era 127 (A.D. 205) which mentions the *Svarga.* It seems that the Śakas also believed in the conception of the *Svarga* and they acted for the attainment of it.

*Hell* : The Hindu mythology is well acquainted with the conception of hell. Its antiquity can be traced in the Vedic age,[935] but the conception of the hell was not fully developed in the early Vedic age. But it gradually becomes complicated as Epics,[936] Buddhist[937] and Jaina[938] sources mention its developed form.

The conception of hell also seems to be developed in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* which holds that the hells are situated beneath the earth and beneath the waters and into which sinners are finally sent.[939]

Our Purāṇa[940] futher says that many fearful hells are the awful provinces of the kingdom of Yama, where many tortures are given. All, who deviate from the duties imposed upon them by their caste and condition, whether in thought, word or deed, are sentenced to punishment in the regions of the dammed.[941] The Purāṇa believes that the gods in hell are beheld by the inhabitants of hell, as they move with their heads inverted. The gods also behold the sufferings of those in hell.[942] It is mentioned that a sinner goes to *Naraka* who neglects the due expiation of his guilt. Hell has been defined in the Purāṇa that it is that which gives pain to mind, hence vice is called hell.[943]

The numbers of hell should be considered here. Like other ancient literary sources,[944] the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also refers to several hells. At one place it mentions the names of seven hells,[945] at another place[946] it mentions 26 hells, but the Purāṇa also records that the number of hells might have been hundred and even thousands.[947]

Other Purāṇas[948] also corroborate the prevalence of several hells. A few hells have been mentioned in the Purāṇa and it is needless to examine them all. The names of hells[949] are Adhomukha, Andhatāmiśra, Asipatravana, Kṛmiśa, Kṛmibakṣa, Lālābhakṣa, Lavaṇa, Pūyavaha and so on.

*Torture in Hell*: The torture in hell is another important point to be considered here. The conception of the torture of hell can be found in the Vedic literature.[950] The Jātakas[951] and the epic literature[952] are also replete with the several horrible sights and torments of hells.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*[953] also discusses the torments of hell and shows its horrible scene. The Purāṇa says that men are bound, when they die, by the servant of Yama (*Yamakiṁkara*) and beaten with sticks and have to encounter the fierce aspect of yama, and the horrors of their terrible route. In the different hells there are various intolerable tortures with burning sand, fire, machines and weapons, some are severed with saws, some roasted in forges, some are chopped with axes, some buried in the ground, some are mounted on stakes, some caste to wild beasts to be devoured, some are gnawed by vultures, some torn by tigers, some are boiled in oil, some rolled in sliva, some are precipitated from great heights, some forced upwards by engines. The number of punishments inflicted in hell, which are the consequences of sin, is infinite.

It must be mentioned here that every body who goes to hell to bear the burnt of tortures. We are told in the Purāṇa that when Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to hell for bringing their preceptor's sons even they had to face the *Yamayātanā*.[954]

Other Purāṇas also discuss the pain given in the hell. The *Brahma Purāṇa*[955] contains horrowing descriptions of the horrible torments of hell. The *Nārada Purāṇa*[956] also describes the different hells and torments. The details of its are also found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.[957] The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*[958] also mentions the punishment meted out to perpetrators of various sins.

The idea of torture of hell appears to show the result of sinful acts which lead to hell full of tortures. People might have been afraid

of the tortures of hell. This is only to divert the mind of people from doing any sinful act.

We have taken into account of the religious condition of India as depicted in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. We have seen that different sects lived together peacefully. The heretics were not inactive but they were highly criticised in Hindū society. It has been also marked that the different kinds of Vedic sacrifices were prevalent in that age. There was a rise of Vedic sacrifices with great enthusiasm. Different Vedic sacrifices were Agniṣṭoma, Rājasūya, Vājapeya and Aśvamedha. The householder had to perform the *pañchamahāyajña* and *śrāddha* for the manes. The age of the Purāṇa also witnessed the growth of Bhāgavatism. Several brāhmaṇical gods were also respected in society. The conception of demi-gods was too prevalent. The idea of anti-gods and goddesses are also found mentioned in our Purāṇa. We have also seen that people had not shaken off the worship of demi-gods. The different kinds of religious activities were prevalent in that age. The idea of sin was prevalent in society to a great extent. People were afraid of sin. The conception of hell and heaven was also in a developed stage in that age.

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185. *Mbh. Śānti*. 339. 36-41, 46.
186. *Viṣ. P*. V. 12. 12.
187. *Ibid*., V. 16.23.
188. *Ibid*., V. 6.20.
189. *Ibid*., V. 12. 5.
190. *Ibid*., V. 12. 12.
191. *Ibid*., V. 1. 61; 20.50; 37.1.
192. *ORLI*, pp. 49 f; *GEI*, p. 395 fn. 3.
193. *Mahā*. on II. 3.36, III. I. 26, III. 2, 11.
194. *Viṣ. P*. I. 4. 6.
195. *Manu*. I. 10.
196. *Collected works* of Bhandarkar Vol. IV, pp. 43 f.
197. *Ibid*., p. 45.
198. *Mbh. Van*. chs. 188, 189.
199. *Viṣ. P*. V. 3. 10; 18. 39-41.
200. *Ibid*., V. 30. 67-69.
201. *Ibid*., V. 18. 48-51.
202. *Ibid*., V. 30, 78-79.
203. *Ibid*., V. 39. 75-76; 17.9.
204. cf. *RV*. I. 155. 5; 22. 20; 154. 5.
205. cf. *Ait. Br*. 1. 1; *Śāt. Br*. XIV. 1. 1.
206. *Mbh. Bhīṣma*. chs, 65, 66; *Śānti*, ch. 43.
207. *Collected works* of Bhandarkar, Vol. IV. p. 49.
208. *Viṣ. P*. VI. 2.17.
209. *Ibid*., V. 7. 66.
210. *Ibid*., I. 17. 47.
211. *ASIAR*, 1925-26, pp. 183 f.
212. *Ep. Ind*. VIII. p. 60.
213. *Mora Stone Inscription* of the period of Rajuvula (*JRAS*, 1911, p. 151): *Mathura Inscription* of Ṣoḍāṣa (*MASI*. No. 5).
214. *Viṣ. P*. V. chs. 1-21.
215. *Ibid*.. V. 8.31 ff.
216. *Jāt*. IV. 50. ff.
217. Mc Crindle, *Megasthanes and Arrian*, p. 201.
218. *Comp. HI*. II. p. 389; *JISOA*, XIV, 1946, pp. 18 ff. *Mathura Mus*. No. 1344; D. 47.
219. *IHQ*. XXX. p. 363 ff.
220. *Viṣ. P*. V. ch. 5.
221. *Ibid*., V. ch. 7.
222. *Viṣ. P*. V. ch. 14.
223. *Ibid*., V. ch. 16.
224. *Mbh. Ādi*. 21.12.
225. *Ibid*., *Śānti*, 342. 70.
226. *Viṣ P*. V. 12. 11-12.
227. *Collected works* of Bhandarkar, Vol. IV, pp. 51 ff.
228. *Ibid*., p. 53.
229. *JRAS*, 1907, p. 981.
230. *Vis. P*. V. 6. 1. ff.
231. *Ibid*., V. 20.1. ff.
232. Barnett, *HGH*, p. 96.
233. Barnett, *HGH*, p. 96.
234. *Ibid*., p. 97.
235. *Vis. P*. V. 38.1.12 ff.
236. *Ibid*., V. 38.13, 15, 20, 28.
237. *Ibid*., V. 6.28 ff.
238. cf. *ṚV*. I. 154. 6.
239. *HGH*, p. 90; *JISOA*, XIV. p. 23.
240. Kielhorn, *Mahā*. I. p. 426.
241. *Sel. Ins*. pp. 91-92.

242. *Sel. Ins.* p. 186.
243. Diksitar, *Pl.* III. pp. 71 ff.
244. *Viṣ. P.* V. chs. 24, 25, 35.
245. *Mbh.* V. 154.31.
246. *Viṣ. P.* V. 8.1.ff.
247. *Ibid.*, V. 9.1 ff.
248. *Ibid.*, V. 15.1.ff.
249. *Ibid.*, V. ch. 26.
250. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.66-96.
251. *Ibid.*, V. 25. 19.
252. *Ibid.*, V. 36.13.
253. *Ibid.*, V. 35.20.
254. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.95.
255. *INM.* p. 108.
256. Banerjea, *op. cit.*, p. 424, pl. XXVII. 3.
257. *Ibid.*, p. 424 fn.
258. *Viṣ. P.* V. 35.33, 37.
259. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.91.
260. *Ibid.*, V. 35.20.
261. *Ibid.*, V. 25.6.
262. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.95.
263. *Ibid.*, V. 17.23.
264. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.95.
265. *Ibid.*, V. 25.4.ff.
266. *Ibid.*, V. 36.11.
267. *Ibid.*, V. 36.14.
268. *Mark.* 16.5.ff.
269. Agrawala, *CBMA*, p. 23; Banerjea, *JISOA* (1946), p. 25.
270. *pl. IV. 4*; *JISOA*, XIV, p. 25.
271. *ASIAR*, 1918-19, pp. 21-22, pl. XII.9.
272. *Viṣ. P.* V. 28. 11. ff.
273. *Ibid.*, V. 36. 9.
274. S. V., *Saṁkarṣaṇa*, Apte, *SED*.
275. *Viṣ. P.* V. 25.1; 35.3.
276. *Ibid.*, V. 18.36-38.
277. *Ibid.*, V. 37. 54-56.
278. *Ibid.*, II. 5.18.
279. *Ibid.*, V. 36. 13.
280. *JISOA*, 1937, p. 126, pl. XIV. 4; Agrawala, *Provincial Museum, Lucknow*, p. 41 Fig. 1.
281. Vogel, *ISL*, p. 196.
282. *pl. V. 1, JISOA*, XIV, p. 25.
283. *Viṣ P.* V. 25.1 ff.
284. *Ibid.*, V. 8. 1 ff.
285. *Ibid.*, V. 9.1. ff.
286. *Ibid.*, V. 36.1.
287. *Ibid.*, V. 25.1. ff.
288. *Ibid.*, V. 26.12; 27.10.
289. *Ibid.*, V. 27.18-20.
290. *Ibid.*, V. 27.27 ff.
291. *Viṣ. P.* V. 32.6.
292. *Ibid.*, V. 32.7.
293. *Ibid.*, V. 32.27.
294. *Ibid.*, V. 33.6-8.
295. *Ibid.*, V. ch. 33.
296. *Ibid.*, I. ch. 2; I. 9.40 ff.
297. *Ibid.*, I. 2. 1 ff; 12.58 ff.
298. *Ibid.*, I. 2. 62 ff.
299. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 63-65.
300. *Ibid.*
301. *Ibid.*, I. 12.41.
302. *Ibid.*, I. 20. 14.
303. *Ibid.*, I. 22. 77.
304. *Ibid.*, I. 12.45; 22.68.
305. Fausboll, *IM. p.* 104.
306. *Viṣ. P.* I.22.69.
307. *Ibid.*, I. 12. 45; 22. 670.
308. *Ibid.*, I. 12.45; 22.71.
309. *Ibid.*, I. 12.45; 22.69.
310. *Vis. P.* I. 12.45.
311. *Ibid.*, I. 22. 74.
312. *Ibid.*, I. 22. 73.
313. Fausboll, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
314. *Viṣ. P.* I. 20.9 ff.
315. *Ibid.*, I. 14. 23. ff.
316. *Ibid.*, I. 12. 53. ff.
317. *Ibid.*, I. 14. 46.
318. *Ibid.*, V. 29. 14, 34.

319. *Ibid.*, I. 1. 33.
320. *Ibid.*, V. 1.33; 34.18.
321. *Ibid.*, V. 34. 17.
322. *Ibid.*, IV. 13. 113.
323. Fausboll, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
324. *IHQ.* XXX (1954), p. 358.
325. *Ibid.*, p. 360.
326. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 142 ff.
327. *Ibid.*, I. 8. 29.
328. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 117.
329. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 118.
330. *Mbh.* XII. 59. 131-174.
331. *Ibid.*, I. 55. 34.
332. *Rāmā*, II. 118. 20.
333. *Amar.* I. 1. 18 f; 1. I. 27.
334. *Viṣ. P.* I. 8. 15.
335. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 100-107.
336. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.133.
337. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 136.
338. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 135.
339. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 138.
340. *Mbh.* II. 7. 28.
341. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.128.
342. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 127.
343. *Mbh.* XII. 221.60 f.
344. *Ibid.*, XIII. 11. 18.
345. *Viṣ. P.* I. 8.17, 30.
346. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 117, 226.
347. Coomarswamy, *The Eastern Art*, I, p. 178.
348. Gonda, *AEV*, pp. 212-213.
349. *Mbh.* XIII. 11.3.
350. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 26 ff.
351. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 123.
352. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 124.
353. *Ibid.*,I . 9. 125.
354. *Ibid.*, *I.* 9. 127-128.
355. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.131-132.
356. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 123, 127.
357. Gonda, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
358. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 100.
359. Barua, *GBG*, II. pp. 95 f; Marshall *Sanchi*, II, pl. 41.
360. *Viṣ. P.* I. ch. 9.
361. Barua, *op. cit.* pp. 95-96.
362. Allan, *CCAI*, pl. XXXVIII. 23, 24.
363. Whitehead, *PMC.* I, pl. IV. 9, XII. 308; XIII. 322.
364. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.100.
365. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 117.
366. *pl. VI. 1*; Banerjea, *op. cit.*, p. III.
367. *pl. III. 2. 6*; Barua, *Bharhut*, pl. XXIII.2
368. *Viṣ. P.* I. 2. 102.
369. Coomarswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 31; and *pl. I. 5*; *III. 1.*
370. Banerjea, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
371. *Ibid.*, p, 110 fn.2. and *pl. VI. 2.*
372. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
373. *IHQ.* XVII, pp. 370-371.
374. Hopkins, *EM*, p. 217.
375. *EM.* pp. 197, 205, 210 fn.
376. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
377. *VSM.* p. 41.
378. *Viṣ. P.* I. 4. 8.
379. *SBE.* Vol.12, pp. 216-218.
380. *Ved. Ind.* I. p. 178.
381. *Mat.* ch. 1; *Bhāg*, VIII. ch. 24, *Agni*, ch. 2.
382. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
383. *Śat. Br.* VII. 5.1.5.
384. *Viṣ. P.* I. 1.88.
385. *Vis. P.* I.4.8.
386. cf. *ṚV.* VIII. 77.10.
387. *Śat. Br.* 14.1.2.11.
388. *Tait. Ār.* 10.1.8.
389. *Tait. Saṁ.* 7. 1. 5; *Tait.* Br. 1. 1 3.6; *Rāma*, q. OST. IV. p. 30.
390. *Vā.* 23. 103-107; *Bhāg.* XI. 4.18; *Agni*, ch. 4.
391. *Viṣ. P.* I.4.7 ff.
392. *Ibid.*, I. 4.7 ff.

393. *Visṇudharm*. III. 119.62
394. *Viṣ. P.* I. 4.26.
395. *Ibid.*
396. *Ibid.*, I. 4.25, 34.
397. *Mat*. 248.69.
398. *Viṣ. P.* I. 4. 33.
399. *Ibid.*, I. 4. 32.
400. *Ibid.*, I. 4. 34.
401. *Ibid.*, I. 4. 33.
402. *Ibid.*, I. 4. 32.
403. *Viṣ. P.* I. 4.32.
404. *Purāṇa*, July 1963, p. 214.
405. *Ibid.*
406. *Tait. Ār*. 10, 1. 7. 16.
407. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151; Fausboll, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
408. *Bhāg*. VII. chs. 8-10; *Agni*, ch. 4; *Mat*. chs. 161-163.
40˙. *Vis. P.* I. chs. 7.12.
410. *Viṣ. P.* I. 20.30-32.
411. *Ibid.*, I. 20-31.
412. *Ibid.*, V. 5.16.
413. *ṚV*. I.2.22; 22. 18; *Śat. Br.* II.2.51.
414. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 148 ff.
415. *Viṣ. P.* V. 5.17.
416. *Vām*. chs. 23-31 and 89-94; *Agni*. ch. 5, *Mat*. chs. 161-167, 244-48; *Brahma*, chs. 73, 213.
417. Jarl Carpenter, *Kuppa. Com. Vol.* p. 9.
418. Sukthankar, *ABORI*, XVIII. p. 69.
419. *Vā*. chs. 91-93, *Bhāg*. IX chs. 15-16; *Agni*. ch. 6.
420. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 7.34.
421. *Ibid.*, VI. 7.36; 11.20.
422. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.94.
423. *Ibid.*, VI. 7.36.
424. The *Rāmāyāṇa* deals with the glory and exploits of Rāmchandra. The *Mahābhārata* refers to him (2.50; 3.98, 149, 150, 274-93; 7.59; 12.28).
425. *Agni*. chs. 5-11; *Brahma*. ch. 213; *Kūrma*. I. ch. 21; *Ling*. pt. 2, ch. 5.
426. *Viṣ. P.* IV. ch. 4.
427. *Ibid.*, VI. 4.1. ff.
428. *Ibid.*, VI. 4.103 ff.
429. *Ibid.*, VI. 4.87.
430. q. Bulake, *Rāmakathā*, pp. 55 f.
431. *Raghu*. X.
432. *Māt*. 47.247; *Bhāg*. I. 3. 24; *Agni*. ch. 16; Wilkins, *HM*. pp. 237 ff.
433. *Mbh*. II. ch. 50; 3.192; *INM*, p. 377.
434. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 24.98 ff.
435. *Bhāg*. I. ch. 3; X. 17.2; *Brahma*, ch. 213; *Agni*. ch. 16, *Vā*. 98.104-117.
436. Hopkins, *EM*, pp. 219 ff.
437, Tandon, *PV*, p. 40,
438. *Viṣ*. P. I. 2.2; V. 33.3.
439. *Ibid.*, I. 9.63. V. 33. 1.
440. *Ibid.*, V. 33. 50.
441. *Ibid.*, V. 33. 40.
442. *Ibid.*, V. 33. 45.
443. *Ibid.*, I. 9. 63; V. 33. 1.
444. *pl. III. 4*; Coomarswamy, *LSB* pl. XXXVIII. 3.
445. *DHI*. pp. 122-123.
446. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9. 97.
447. *Ibid.*, II. 8. 116-117.
448. *Ibid.*, II. 8. 117.
449. *Ibid.*, V. 30.62.
450. *pl. III. 4*;
451. Whitehead, *PMC*, I. pl. XIX. 209, 211; XVII. 31, 36; XIX. 209.
452. *Vā*. 54.76; *Bhāg*. X. 55. 1-3.
453. *pl. VI. 3, 6, 7.*
454. *CBMA*, p. 27.
455. *Viṣ. P.* I. 8.11-14; 8.23.
456. *Ibid.*, V. 33.50.
457. *Viṣ. P.* V. 34.30.
458. *Ibid.*,I. 9.63: V. 30.67.
459. *Ibid.*, VI. 3. 16.
460. *Ibid.*, III. 17.26.

461. Apte, *SED*. p. 365.
462. *Viṣ. P*. V. ch. 33.
463. *Ibid*., V. 33. 14-16.
464. *Viṣ. P*. V. 33. 14-16.
465. *Ibid*., V. 34.32 ff.
466. *Ibid*. V. 34. 34 ff.
467. Apte, *SED*, p. 160.
468. Wilson, *Viṣ. P*. (tr.), p. 471, fn. 5.
469. *Viṣ. P*. V. 34.29 ff.
470. *Mahā* on V. 2.76.
471. Hazra, *op. cit*., p. 203.
472. *Jāt*. II, pp. 29-31; 1V. pp. 154, 168; *Rāmā*, *YK*. 69.4.
473. Diksitar, *Pl*. II, pp. 514 ff.
474. *Viṣ P*. II. 17.16.
475. *Viṣ. P*. I. 9. 32 ff.
476. *Ibid*., IV. 1. 85; I. chs. 5-7.
477. *Ibid*., IV. 1. 68-69.
478. *EM*. pp. 193, 195.
479. *Viṣ. P*. I. 7.4-8.
480. *DHI*. p. 517; *JUPHS*, 1951, p. 1.
481. Bajapai, *Baroda State Museum Bulletin*, No. 5, p. 18.
482. *JUPHS*, IV. p. 50.
483. *JISOA*, V. p. 123.
484. *Ved. Myth*. pp. 88. ff; cf. *OST*. V. pp. 119 ff.
485. Hopkins, *op. cit*., pp. 97 ff.
486. *PI*. I. p. 10.
487. *PI*. I. p. 10.
488. *Viṣ. P*. I. 9. 34; 8.22.
489. *Ibid*., I. 9. 63.
490. *Ibid*., I. 10. 16, 17.
491. *Ibid*., I. 10. 14.
492. Allan, *CCAI*. p. 199, pl. XXVIII. 8. Banerjea, *op. cit*., pp. 146-47.
493. Bajpai, *Mathura*, p. 32, pl. 23. Agrawala, *CBMA*. p. 46, No. J. 123.
494. *Viṣ. P*. V. 20.1 ff.
495. *Ibid*., V. 4. 6.
496. *Ibid*., I. 17.31.
497. *Ibid*., III. 11. 44.
498. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 1.32.
499. *Ved. Myth*. p. 56; *OST*. IV, p. 126·
500. *EM*. pp. 72, 138, 141, 164.
501. *Viṣ. P*. I. 12.12-13,
502. *Ibid*., I. 15.12.
503. *Ibid*., V. 10. 19. ff.
504. *Ibid*., V. 10.26.
505. *Ibid*., I. 8. 26.
506. *Ibid*., V. 30.30, 31-32, 38, 45.
507. *Ibid*., I. chs. 9, 21; V. ch. 20.
508. *Ibid*., I. 21.38; V. 20.41.
509. *Ibid*., I. 9.7; V. 30.35.
510. *pl. III. 5*; Marshall, *BAG*, pl. 51.75; 42.66; Sarasvati, *SIS*. pl. V. 30.
511. *pl. IV. 1*; J. Cambell, *AIA*, Fig. 42.
512. *Ved. Myth*. pp, 30 ff.
513. *Vis. P*. III. 2.2.
514. *Ibid*., III. 2.4.
515. *Ibid*., IV. 13.14.
516. *Ibid*., III. 5.25
517. *Ved. Myth*. p. 31.
518. *EM*. pp. 85, 87 ff.
519. *Vis. P*. II. 8.5.
520. S.K. Sarasvati, *SIS*. pl. X. 49; *pl. IV. 2*.
521. *Pl. II. 6*.
522. Banerjea, *op. city*., pl. XXIX. 1.
523. *Vis. P*. III. ch. 5.
524. *Ibid*., II. 10.20-21.
525. *Ibid*., II.10.2 ff.
526. *Ved. Myth*, pp. 22 ff; *OST*, V. pp. 58 ff.
527. *EM*, pp. 116. ff; *PI*, III. pp. 155 f.
528. *Vis. P*. III. 11.44.
529, *Vis. P*. V. 30.58 ff.
530. *Ibid*., I. 8.28.
531. *Mbh*. I. 66.54-55.
532. *ṚV*. V. 41.3; cf. E. N. Ghosh, *J&PASB*, XXVIII. p. 31.
533. Hopkins, *op cit*. p. 129.

534. *Vis. P.* IV. 7.13-16.
535. *Ved. Myth*, p. 26.
536. *Vis. P.* V. 30.59.
537. *Ibid.*, I. 22.3.
538. *Ibid.*, V. 29.10.
539. *Ibid.*, V. 30.59.
540. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 25-26.
541. *Rāmā.* VII. 3.18.
542. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 171 ff; *Ved. Ind.* II. p. 186.
543. *Viṣ P.* I. 22.8.
544. *Mbh.* XIII. 70.20 f.
545. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.44.
546. *Ibid.*, III. 6.2-6.
547. *Ibid.*, III. 7.5.
548. *Supra, Hell.*
549. *Viṣ. P.* V. 21.30.
550. *Tait. saṁ.* V. 10.8.2; 2.3.1.
551. *Jāt.* II. p. 167.
552. *Ibid.*, IV. pp. 173, 253.
553. Hopkins, *op. city.* pp. 107 ff.
554. *Viṣ. P.* V. 30.60.
555. *Ibid.*, III. 7.14; VI. 5.44.
556. *Ibid.*, III. 7.35.
557. Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 108,110.
558. *Viṣ. P.* III. 7.15.
559. *Ibid.*, III. 7.20. ff.
560. *Ibid.*, III. 7.14.
561. *Ibid.*, I. 8.27.
562. Fousboll, *op. cit.*, p. 127.
563. *Viṣ. P.* III. 7.7.
564. *Ibid.*, III. 7.19.35.
565. *Ibid.*, III. 7.35.
566. *Ibid.*, V. 21.30.
567. Fousboll, *op. cit.* pp. 135-136.
568. *Viṣ. P.* V. 26.12.
569. *Ibid.*, I. 8. 28;15.116.
570. *Ibid.*, I. 8.27; III. 2.11.
571. *Ibid.*, I. 21.30 ff; V. 30,63.
572. *Ibid.*, III. 11 46.
573. *Ibid.*, I. 15.107.
574. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 134 f.
575. *Jāt.* IV. p. 40; V. p. 254, VI. pp. 129-131.
576. *EM.* pp. 156. ff.
577. *Nir.* II. 5.13.
578. *Rāmā.* I. 45.31.
579. *Viṣ. P.* V. 38.73.
580. *Viṣ. P.* II. 10.10.
581. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.48-49.
582. *Ibid.*, II. 10.11.
583. *Ibid.*, II. 10.3.
584. *IM.* pp. 125 f.
585. *Mat.* 6.45;10-24; *Bhāg.* II. 1. 36.
586. *Viṣ. P.* I. 9.96.
587. *Ibid.*, I. 15; 12. ff
588. *Ibid.*, V. 38. 73 ff.
589. *Ibid.*, II. 10.3. ff.
590. *Ibid.*, I. 15.12. ff.
591. *Ibid.*, I. 17.9.
592. *Ibid.*, II. 10.20; 11.16; V. 3.5.
593. *Ibid.*, I. 9.102.
594. *Rāmā.* YK. 91.10; 131.68; *EM.* pp. 228. f.
595. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pp. 27-29; pl. XV. outer face.
596. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pp. 27-29.
597. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 49 ff; *HM.* pp. 37 ff.
598. *EM.* pp, 167 ff.
599. *Viṣ. P.* III. 2.2-7; cf. *Mbh.* I. 67.35.
600. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 20.40.
601. *Ibid.*, I, 5.24; V. 2.17.
602. *IM.* pp. 127-128.
603. Apte, *SED*, p. 207; Denielou, *H. Poly.* p. 306.
604. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 136-137; *PO.* Vol. XIII, pp. 65 ff.
605. *EM.* pp. 152 ff; *IM.* p. 126.
606. *PI.* I. p. 512.
607. *Viṣ. P.* V. 1.18.
608. *Ibid.*, I. 5.45-57.

609. *Ibid.*, IV. 6. 51 ff.
610. Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 153 ff.
611. *PI.* I. p. 512.
612. *Viṣ. P.* I. 5 46-47.
613. *Ibid.*, I. 9.101, II. 10.20;11.16.
614. *Mārk*, 103.57-58.
615. *Rāmā.* I. 73.38; *YK.* 19.90.
616. *Ved. Myth.* p. 136.
617. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 4. 100-101.
618. *Ibid.*, II. ch. 10.
619. *Ibid.*
620. pl. II. 1; Cunningham, *Bharhut*, pl. XIII.
621. *Ved. Myth*, p. 49; *BV.* XII. pp. 1 ff.
622. *IM.* p. 79.
623. *Viṣ. P.* V. ch. 30.
624. *Ved. Myth.* p. 49.
925. *Jāt.* VI. pp. 93, 94, 102, 127.
626. *IM.* p. 79.
627. Barua, *Bharhut*, III. pl. XXVIII.
628. *DHI.* p. 530.
629. *Ibid.*,
630. *pl. IV. 6*; Smith, *Jain Stupa*, pl. XXI. 1.
631. Nagar, *JBORS*, XXVIII, pt. IV, p. 468; Mathura Mus. No. 2889, 2915.
632. *pl. V. 2*; Vogel, *ISL*, pl. XVb.
633. *pl. V. 3*; Vogel, *ISL*, pl. XVa.
634. Altekar, *CGCBH*, pl. I. 11 ff.
635. *Viṣ. P.* I. 22.6, 21.7.
636. *Ibid.*, I. 21.18.
637. *Ibid.*
638. *Ibid.*, I. 21.17.
639. *Ibid.*, V. 7.78.
640. *Ibid.*, V. 30.59.
641. *Mārk*, 2.25.
642. *Jāt.* VI. p. 93; II. pp. 10-11.
643. *Rāmā*, *YK.* 105.22; Griffith's *Rāmā* (tr.) II. p. 167, V. p. 153.
644. *pl. V. 2, 3*; Vogel, *ib.* pl. XVa, b.
645. Granwedel, *BAI.* Fig. 10; Foucher, *BBA*, Vol. II. Fig. 466.
646. *DHI.* pp. 344 ff.
647. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 3.4, 5, 7.
648. *Ibid.*, I. 21 18.
649. *Ibid.*, I. ch. 21.
650. *Ibid.*, I. 5.44-45.
651. *Ibid.*
652. *Viṣ. P.* V. 7.1. ff.
653. *Ibid.*, I. 9.84 ff.
654. *Ibid.*, II. 5.18.
655. *PI.* III. p. 461.
656. *Viṣ. P.* I. 2.64.
657. *EM.* pp. 205, 208, 217 f.
658. *supra*, Balarāma.
659. *EM.* pp. 24. 212.
660. *Viṣ. P.* II. 5.4.
661. *Ibid.*, II. 5.13.
662. *Ibid.*, II. 5.26.
663. *Ibid.*, II. 5.5. ff.
664. *IM.* p. 29.
665. *PI.* II. p. 220.
666. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, p. 25, pl. XXVIII, Fig. 1.
667. *Viṣ. P.* I. 17.40.
668. *Ibid.*, V. 7.17.
669. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 23 ff. Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 348; *pl. II. 4.*
670. *pl. IV. 4*; Puri, *IUK*, p. 154.
671. *Viṣ. P.* I. 92.
672. *Ibid.*
673. *Ibid.*, 1. 9.5.
674. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pl. XVII; *pl. I. 4.*
675. *Ved. Ind.* II. p. 182.
676. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 148 ff.
677. *Viṣ. P.* I. 5.43.
678. *Ibid.*, I. 5.43.
679. *Ibid.*, II. ch. 10.
680. *Ibid.*, II. 10.3 ff.

681. *JDL*. IV (1921), pp. 47-84; Ray, *MSA*, Figs. 24, 26.
682. *DHI*, pl. XIII. 3.
683. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-24; Banerjea, *op. cit.*, pp. 342 ff.
684. Smith, *Jain Stupa*, pl. XVIII; Agrawala, *IHQ*, pl. XXXVIII, p. 261. *CBMA*, p. 87.
685. *Bṛh. Up*. I. 3.1.
686. *Rāmā*. VII. 2.16-17.
687. *Bṛh. Up*. I. 3.1.
688. *Rāmā*. VII. 2.16-17.
689. *Viṣ. P*. I. 9.32 ff: III. 18.33.
690. *Ved. Myth* p. 156.
691. Hastings, *ERE*, Vol. IV, p. 390.
692. Fausboll, *op. cit.*, pp. 1 ff.
693. *Bhāg*. I. 13.6; VI. 7.18; *Mat*. 47.12; *Vā*. 37.11.
694. *Viṣ. P*. I. 9.10 ff.
695. *Viṣ. P*. I. 5.31.
696. *Ibid.*
697. *Ibid.*, I. 5.54.
698. *Ibid.*, V. 29.16 ff.
699. *Ibid.*, V. 29.32.
700. *Ibid.*, V. 29.31.
701. *Ibid.*, V. 14.1 ff.
702. *Ibid.*, V. 8.2.
703. *Ibid.*
704. *Ibid.*, I. 5.46.
705. *EM*. p. 37.
706. *Viṣ. P*. I. 5.46.
707. Barua, *Bharhut*, III, p. 58.
708. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 46 f.
709. *Bhāg*. II. 7.13; V. 24.30; *Vā*. 39.29.
710. *Viṣ. P*. I. ch. 21.
711. *Ibid.*, I. 21.4.
712. *Ibid.*, I. 9.110-111.
713. *Ibid.*, I. 17.2-6.
714. *Ibid.*, V. 29.19.
715. *Ibid.*, I. ch. 17.
716. *IV*. II. 18.4; *Tait. Saṁ*. II. 4.11.
717. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 f.
718. *Mat*. 8.5; *Vā*. 9.55.
719. *Viṣ. P*. III. 11.49.
720. *Ibid.*, I. 1.18.
721. *Ibid.*, I. 21.23.
722. *Ibid.*, III. 11.49.
723. *Ved. Ind*. II. p. 53.
724. *ERE*, Vol. II, p. 810.
725. *PI*. II. 13.20.
726. *Viṣ. P*. III. 11.49.
727. *Ibid.*, III. 13.20.
728. *Ved Myth*. pp. 162 f.
729. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 4.45-49.
730. *Ibid.*, I. 12.24. ff.
731. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.45 ff.
732. *Ved. Myth*. p. 163.
733. *Rama*. I. 30.20 ff; *YK*. 114.52.
734. *Ved. Myth*. p. 163.
735. *EM*. pp. 68 f.
736. *Viṣ. P*. I. 1.13.
737. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.63.
738. *Ved. Myth*. p. 163.
739. *EM*. pp. 39 f.
740. *Viṣ. P*. I. 12.23 ff.
741. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.45 ff.
742. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.43.
743. *Ibid.*, I. 5.59-60.
744. *Ibid.*, I. 21.25 ff.
745. *Viṣ. P*. I. 5.41-43.
746. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 ff
747. *Sel. Ins*. p. 177; *Ep. Ind* XVI. pp. 239 ff.
748. Cunningham, *CAI* (1963) p. 63, pl. III. 7.
749. Marshall, *Sanchi*, Vol. II. pl. 61.
750. *ṚV*. I. 169.6; 173.11; VII. 47.11. 1-2.
751. Kane, *HDS*. IV., p. 554.
752. *Tait. Saṁ*. VI. 1.1.1-2; IV. 5.11.
753. *Mbh. Van*. 82.13-17, 9-12; *Anu*. 108.3-4.
754. *Skanda*. I. 1.31-37.

755. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 582.
756. *Viṣ. P.* III. 9.12.
757. *Sel. Ins.* pp. 160.
758. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 8.34, 36.
759. Kane, *op. cit.*, IV. p. 52.
760. *Tait. Saṁ.* I. 6.7.3-4.
761. *Gobh. Gr. S.* I. 5.26; *Kh. Gr. S.* II. 1.4, 6.
762. *Mbh. Anu.* 106.1; *Śanti*, 79.18.
763. *Gar.* I. 128.6; *Bhavi.* I. 184.27.
764. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 8.34, 36.
765. *Ibid.*, VI. 8.29.
766. *Ibid.*, III. 18.56.
767. *ERE.* Vol. 3, pp. 387 ff.
768. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.64.
769. *Ibid.*
770. *Ibid.*, III. 9.11, 13.
771. *Manu.* IV. 4-5; VI. 43, 50-51.
772. *ṚV.* X. 154.2; *Chh. Up.* V. 10.1-2.
773. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 68, 85, 223.
774. *Viṣ. P.* I. 12.8. ff.
775. *Ibid.*, I. ch. 15.
776. *Ibid.*, IV. 1.96.
777. *Ibid.*, I. 1.38.71.
778. *Ibid.*, V. 38.89, 92.
779. *Ibid.*, III. 9.22.
780. *Viṣ. P.* I. 15.12 ff.
781. *Ibid.*, I. 12.13 ff.
782. *Ibid.*, I. 12.36.
783. *Ibid.*, I. 12.38.
784. *Ibid.*
785. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 788-789.
786. *Viṣ. P.* III. 15.28 ff.
787. *Ibid.*, III. 14.24.
788. *Ibid.*, III. 15.1 ff.
789. *Ibid.*, III. 11.62-63.
790. *Viṣ. P.* III. 13.2.
791. *Ibid.*, III. 13.12.
792. *Sel. Ins.* pp. 160 f. 165.
793. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147; *JBORS*, XVIII. pp. 4 ff.
794. *Viṣ. P.* II. 2.39.
795. *Ibid.*, I. 6.41; II. 6.42.
796. *Ibid.*, I. 17.77.
797. *Vis. P.* I. 17.79.
798. *Ibid.*, I. 17.78-79; II. 6.37, 38.
799. *Ibid.*, II. 6.42.
800. *Ibid.*, VI. 2.15-16, 40.
801. *Ibid.*, VI. 8.19-20.
802. *Brahm.* 216.87, 88; 41.63, ch. 176.
803. *ṚV.* X. 75.
804. *Mbh. Anu.* 25.36-38.
805. *Kūr.* I. 36.20; *Mat.* 104.5.
806. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 8.29-31.
807. *Ibid.*, III. 11.97.
808. *Ibid.*, VI. 8.12, 17; 8.29, 30, 51 f.
809. *Ibid.*, VI. 8.31-32.
810. *Ibid.*, I. 22.88.
811. *Ibid.*, I. 22.89.
812. *Ibid.*, I. 20.36-37.
813. *Ibid.*, I. 13.94.
814. *Ibid.*, II. 16.25.
815. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 2.132-133.
816. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 26, 91.
817. *EM.* pp. 3 ff.
818. *Viṣ. P.* II. 8.110 ff.
819. *Ibid.*, IV. 416 ff.
820. *Ibid.*, IV. 4.30-31.
821. *Ibid.*, III. 18.56.
822. *Ibid.*, II. 8.110 ff.
823. *Agni.* ch. 110; *Mat.* chs. 180-185; *Vā.* 77.117.
824. Strabo, XV. 1.69.
825. Hopkins. *op. cit.*, pp. 4 f, 45, 60.
826. *Ved. Myth.* p. 86.
827. *Viṣ. P.* VI. 8.31, 33, 39.
828. *Ibid.*, III. 14.18.
829. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 296.
830. *Mat.* 186.11.
831. *supra*, Appen.
832. *Viṣ. P.* III. 11.120.
833. *JOI.* V. pp. 228-30.

834. *EM*. pp. 7, 55, 144.
835. *Mat*. 1.22; *Vā*. 8.93.
836. *Viṣ. P*. I. 9.55.
837. *Ibid*., V. 30.39-40.
838. *EM*. p. 55.
839. *Viṣ. P*. V. 30.39 ff.
840. *EM*. pp. 140. 214.
841. *Viṣ. P*. V. 38.7.
842. *Ibid*., V. 30.46.
843. *Ibid*., V. 30.47.
844. *Ibid*., I. 9.95.
845. *Ibid*., V. 30.31-32.
846. *Ibid*., V. 31.12.
847. *Ibid*., V. 31.13.
848. *Ibid*., V. 30.20.
849. *Viṣ. P*. V. 30.20.
850. *Ibid*., I. 9.95.
851. *Ibid*.
852. Cunningham, *Bharhut*, p. VII; pl. XXXIV.
853. Maisey, *Sanchi*, p. 22.
854. *pl. I. 1*; Cunningham, *ASIR*. X. p. 43, pl. XX.
855. Coomarswamy, *HIIA*. p. 17.
856. *ṚV*. I. 135.8; *AV*. III. 6.1.
857. *Viṣ. P*. IV. 6.85-94.
858. *Bhāg*. III. 4.3, 8; *Bṇḍ*. III. 11.35.
859. Cunningham, *Bhaahut*, p. 45.
860. *Jāt*. IV. p. 142.
861. *Ved. Myth*. pp. 150-151; *CHI*. I. p. 99.
862. *Mbh. Anu*. ch. 69-82; *Rāmā*. VII. 23.24.
863. *Viṣ. P*. V. 10.26, 40, 46.
864. *Ibid*., III. 21.1.
865. *Ibid*., III. 14.28.
866. *Ibid*., V. 10.26.
867. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6.8.
868. *Rāmā*. IV. 17.36,
869. *supra*, Kṛṣṇa.
870. Kane, *HDS*. IV. pp. 773 f.
871. *Pāra*. XI. 28-29.
872. *Viṣ. P*. I. 9.92.
873. *Ibid*., I. 13.50.
874. *Ibid*., VI. 6.13.
875. *Ibid*., I. 9.92.
876. *EM*. pp. 55, 119.
877. *Bhāg*. I. 17.9; *Mat*. 5.32.
878. *WWI*. p. 319.
879. *Viṣ. P*. VI. 6.17.
880. q. Wilson, *op. cit*., p. 646 fn. 4.
881. *Viṣ. P*. VI. 6.13 ff.
882. *JUPHS*. Vol. V. pt, I, pp. 22 ff.
883. *EM*. pp. 61, 223.
884. *Viṣ. P*. V. 10.45-46.
885. *Ibid*., III. 16.20.
886. *supra*, Śiva.
887. *Viś. P*. V. 33.50.
888. Allan, *CCAI*, p. 120, pl. XIV. 7.8.
889. Jayaswal, *HI*, p. 61.
890. Hastings, *ERE*, Vol. 11.
891. Kane, *op. cit*., Vol. IV, pp. 1 ff.
892. *Ibid*., pp. 2 f.
893. *Ibid*., p. 5.
894. *Chh. Up*. V. 10. 9; *Br. Up*. IV. 2.22;
895. *Ap. Dh. S*. I. 7,21.7-10; *Baudh. Dh. S*. II. 1.60-61.
896. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6. 1 ff.
897. *Tait. Saṁ*. II. 5.1.2.
898. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6.9.
899. *ṚV*. VII. 86. 6; *Chh. Up*. V. 10.9.
900. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6.9.
901. *Ibid*., III. 15.5.
902. *Manu*. XI. 54; *Yāj*. III. 227.
903. Kane, *op. cit*., IV. pp. 22 f.
904. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6.9.
905. *Nir*. VI. 27; *Chh. Up*. V. 10.9.
906. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6.9.
907. *Manu*. XI. 99; *Yāj*. III. 257.
908. *Viṣ. P*. II. 6.14.
909. Kane, *op. cit*., IV. pp. 23 ff.
910. *Nir*. VI. 27; *Chh. Up*. V. 109.

911. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.10.
912. *Manu*, II. 142; *Yāj.* I.34.
913. *Gaut.* II. 56.
914. *Manu*, XI. 54; *Yāj.* III. 227.
915. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.8.
916. *Nir*, VI. 27; *Br. Up.* IV. 3.22.
917. *Yāj.* III. 229-236; III. 234-242.
918. *Manu.* XI. 52-66.
919. *Viṣ. P.* II. ch. 6.
920. *ṚV.* I. 35.6; VIII. 5.8.
921. *ṚV.* IX. 13.10-11.
922. *AV.* III. 29.3; IV. 34.2, 5-6.
923. *Jāt.* VI. pp. 18, 62 ff, 66.
924. *Mbh. Van.* 186.9; Anu. 23.84-102.
925. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.44.
926. *Ibid.*, I. 6. 34, 37.
927. *Ibid.*, I. 6.34.
928. *Ibid.*, I. 6.35.
929. *Ibid.*
930. *Ibid.*, I. 6.37.
931. *Ibid.*
932. *supra*, Serpent.
933. *Viṣ. P.* I. 3.37.
934. *Set. Ins.* pp. 17 f; *IA.* XII. p. 32 f.
935. *Ved. Myth.* pp. 167-170.
936. *Mbh. Śānti*, 321.32; *Anu.* 23.60-82.
937. Law, B.C. *Heaven & Hell in Buddhist perspectives*, 1925, pp. 111-113.
938. *SBE.* Vol. 45, pp. 93 ff.
939. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.6.
940. *Ibid.*
941. *Viṣ. P.* II. 6.30.
942. *Ibid.*, II. 6.31.
943. *Ibid.*, II. 6.44.
944. *Aṣṭā*, VI. 2.38; *Mbh.* 321.32. *Jāt.* V. p. 137.
945. *Viṣ. P.* I. 6.41.
946. *Ibid.*, II. 6.2-5.
947. *Ibid.*, I. 6.28.
948. *Bhāg.* V. 16.6; *Mārk.* 14.39-94.
949. *Viṣ. P.* II. ch. 6.
950. *AV.* V. 19.31; *Sāt. Br.* XI. 6.1.4.
951. *Jāt.* VI. 120 ff; 123 ff.
952. *Mbh. Anu.* 23.60-82; *Svarga.* 2.15-18.
953. *Viṣ. P.* IV. 5.43 ff.
954. *Ibid.*
955. *Brahm.* 214.51-103.
956. *Nārada P.* (*Purvārddha*, 15.1-20).
957. *Bhaviṣva P.* (*Brahm*) 192.11-27.
958. *Mārk.* 14.39.-94.

# Conclusion

The Purāṇic literature holds a very significant position in the sacred and secular literature of the Hindus, being regarded as the next in importance only to the Vedic literature. It has been regarded as an important source of ancient Indian history, it has attracted the attention of scholars for research since the 19th century A.D. The researches on it are also being continued in the present century. A few scholars have tried to study the cultural aspect of the Purāṇa literature. But the analytical study of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* has not been done. In this work I have studied the cultural aspect of the Purāṇa. The scope of the present work is limited to the study of the social, economic and religious life of people, as found in this Purāṇa. The present work has been divided into four chapters besides the introduction and conclusion.

In the first chapter, it has been pointed out that the present Purāṇa is very important from several points of view. It contains valuable information regarding the political and cultural history of the period to which it relates. It belongs to the *pañcharātra* sect. It is clear also from the Purāṇa that Parāśara is a prominent interlocutor who related the whole Purāṇa to Maitreya. This Purāṇa was also transmitted from one person to another for a long time. We further mark that the Purāṇa has been developed from time to time. New materials were added by its compiler as he came to know the facts. The text of the Purāṇa has been subjected to numerous revisions, additions, omissions and modifications. The critical study of this Purāṇa shows that it was not written for any particular class but for all people. General people were in need of a literature containing interesting and valuable information of all aspects of life. The Purāṇa literature served this purpose. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also contains a lot

of information for the purpsose of general people. It has been pointed out in the present work that our Purāṇa always refers to the sources from which it has borrowed the particular portions. But it is difficult in the present state of knowledge to point out the original works from which the Purāṇa has borrowed certain portions. In the same chapter an attempt has been made to fix the tentative date of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. It has been pointed out that the Purāṇa under consideration was compiled between the first century A.D. and early fourth century A.D., most probably before the rise of Chandra Gupta first, i.e. A.D. 319. It appears that the whole Purāṇa was not composed in one age, but it had taken a long time for its final compilation. It is also clear that this Purāṇa is not the production of a single dictator or of a particular period, but it was revised from generation to generation and reshaped gradually to its present character with additions. It has also been pointed out that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* might have been compiled sowewhere in the Gaṅgā-Yamunā *doab*, but not far away from Mathurā.

The second chapter of the present work deals with social life as furnished by our Purāṇa. The Purāṇa appears to be strong supporter of the *varṇāśrama dharma.* The popularity of the system of four castes was prevalent in the age of the Purāṇa. There was gradation in the caste system. The feeling of caste superiority was also intense. The brāhmaṇas considered themselves superior to all the three varṇas. They were enjoying several privileges in society. The despised castes, the chaṇḍālas and the śūdras occupied the lowest rank in society. The caste consciousness was also prevalent in that time. There were numerous duties assigned to all varṇas in society, but we have tried to show that sometimes people or even *dvijas* did not follow the rules of the caste-system. It has also been marked that though the caste-system was very popular in society, it was highly criticised by some people. There was also a neglectful tendency towards *varṇāśrama dharma* in society. We come to the conclusion that anti-brāhmaṇical movements, foreign invasions and the rise of the śūdras affected the brāhmaṇical society and brought the neglectful tendency towards the *varṇāśrama* in that age. The author of our Purāṇa appears to have

been well acquainted with these facts. He does not appear as sitting idle, but he adopts various means to establish and popularies the *varṇāśrama dharma*. In order to lay much importance on the *varṇāśrama dharma*, the Purāṇakāra associates gods and goddesses and sages with this system. He always tries to show that the performance of the *varṇāśrama dharma* is helpful in bringing happiness both in this world and the next. He also fabricates several stories to show the results of the violation of the rules of *varṇāśrama dharma*. Furthermore, the Purāṇakāra prescribes a hell called Saṁdaṁśa for the violator of a vow and of the rules of *āśrama*. The sinners are punished in hell with great cruelty for neglecting or violating the *varṇāśrama dharma*. The idea of untouchability was also prevalent in society. Foreigners were embracing Hindu culture and were admitted in the Hindu fold. Many *Saṁskāras* were performed by people in that age. Family was a homogeneous unit, consisting of blood relations, and the authority of the head was recognised. The general condition of women in society was in degrading state. The Purāṇa presents some dark sides of the condition of women. Women were expected to render services to their respective husbands. Ladies seemed to have enjoyed considerable freedom and were not confined to the walls of house. The standard of living can very well be judged by the data on food, dress and ornaments. The household effects included domestic ultensils needed for food preparation, and furniture. The Purāṇa is also acquainted with different kinds of pastime and recreations which varied according to the taste of the people. Different kinds of musical instruments were used in society. The indoor recreations included the game of dice which was probably meant for rich people, who had time and money to spend in states. Social evils were also prevalent in society. Hygiene and diseases and many other miscellaneous items of social interest, as found in our Purāṇa, have been noticed here. The evidences, on the whole, suggest an advanced society, with full opportunities for relaxation and entertainments, and, despite some social evils, the people, in general, were religious in outlook.

The third chapter deals with the economic life as found in our Purāṇa. We have discussed practically all aspects of economic life in

detail. The subject relating to agriculture and animal husbandry is considered in detail with reference to the divisions of holdings, different kinds of crops and agricultural implements. Husbandry a profession of cattle-rearing was closely associated with land, and cows and other domestic animals were reared. The forced labour (*viṣṭi*) was prevalent in that age. Different professions, workers in metal, domestic servants, cooks, and certain wild professions, like those of the fowler and fisherman were prevalent in society. Such a developed economic life necessarily involved exchange, barter, and the intensive use of coinage. A good many types of coins, mentioned in our Purāṇa, have been noticed here. Merchandise being a comprehensive subject, we have considered the different aspects of trade. We have referred to the means of communication, roads, flora and fauna as found in the Purāṇa. The evidences present a true picture of the economic life in that period which was fully developed and completely matured.

In the fourth chapter the religious life, as furnished by the Purāṇa, has been considered. The study of the present Purāṇa shows that there were different religious sects in society. We have seen in this chapter that Hinduism and heretical sects were not living in harmony. The Nagnas and the Pāṣaṇḍas always criticised the brahmanical religion. The Purāṇakāra does not seem to be idle, but he counter-acts on their criticisms. The controversies among the rival sects were prevalent in society. There was no doubt, considerable bitterness among the followers of the different religious doctrines, but they did not suffer from mutual persecution. It is also clear from the Purāṇa that the different sects of Hinduism lived in perfect accord. The Vedic religion was not neglected in that time. Several kings performed many Vedic sacrifices. The *Yūpas*, the sacrificial wooden pillars, were set up in sacrifices. Certain inscriptions also testify to the existence of these sacrifices in the age of our Purāṇa. The Vedic sacrifices, varying in duration and involving many accessories, were costly and complicated for ordinary people who were satisfied with devotion through propitiations. The Vaiṣṇavism held an important imposition in society. The *Bhakti* cult, confined to Viṣṇu-Vāsudeva and Śiva, was not a new one. The epigraphic and archaeological

pieces of evidence corroborate the popularity of this cult. The heretical sects were also prevalent in that age. The heretics vehemently criticised the Brāhmaṇical religion, and they were opposed to the Vedas, the brāhmaṇas and to the *varṇāśrama dharma*. The Purāṇa also appears to be dead against the heretics. The Purāṇa is acquainted with several brāhmaṇical gods, goddesses, demi-gods, anti-gods. People were following different religious activities in the age of the Purāṇa. The ideas of sin, heaven and hell existed in that age.

Besides the four chapters, there in an Appendix which contains a long list of the rivers, the mountains, tribes, towns and countries of Bhārata varṣa as found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. This Appendix is very useful in locating the place of the compilation of the Purāṇa. Thus on the whole the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* appears as an extant Purāṇa which contains valuable information regarding the cultural life of people.

# Appendix

This part of the Appendix has been prepared with a view to make available the geographical material of Bhārata varṣa as found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. All geographical names of India have been included in this section. Separate lists of the rivers, mountains, tribes, janapadas and towns of India, as found in the Purāṇa, have been mentioned here.

(A) *List of the rivers of Bhāratavarṣa*

Bhīmarathī (II.3.12); Chandrabhāgā (II.3.10); Devikā (II.15.6); Gaṅgā (II.8.110-124); Godāvarī (II.3.12); Gomatī (III.14.18); Ikṣumatī (II.13.53); Kauśikī (IV.7.34): Kṛṣṇaveṇyā (II.3.12); Kṛtamālā (II.3.13); Kumārī (II.3.14); Narmadā (IV.3.7.ff.); Nirvindhyā (II.3.11); Payoṣṇī (ib.); Ṛṣikulyā (II.3.14); Sarasvatī (III.14.18); Śatadrū (II.3.10; III.14.18); Sindhu (IV.24.69); Surasā (II.3.11); Trisāmā (II.3.13); Tāpī (II.3.11); Tāmraparṇī (II.3.13); Veda smṛti (II.3.10); Vipāsā (III.14.18); Yamunā (V.3.18; 7.2; 18.35; 25.8).

(B) *List of the mountains of Bhāratavarṣa*

Arbuda (II.3.16; modern Mount Abu); Gandhamādana (V.24.5; a part of the Himālaya near Badarikāśrama); Govardhana (V.10-38; a hill near Mathurā); Himālaya (I.22.8.); Jambumārga (II.13.33); Kailāśa (I.9.9; II.2.41); Kolāhala (III.18.72); Mahendra (II.3.13); Malaya (II.3.3, 13); Mandāra (I.9.78, 84); Pariyātra (II.3.3, 10); Sahya (II.3.3, 12); Sūktimat (II.3.3, 14); Ṛkṣa (II.3.3, 11); Vindhya (ib.).

(C) *Tribes of Bhāratavarṣa*

Ābhīras (II.3.16; V.38.12.ff.); Ambaṣṭhas (II.3.17); Andhakas (V.35.16; 38.28); Arbudas (II.3.16); Dasyus (V.ch.38); Gardabhillas (IV.24.51-52); Hūṇas (II.3.17); Kāruṣas (ib.); Kirātas (II.3.8); Kukuras

(V.37.39); Kurus (II.3.15); Mālavas (II.3.17); Maunas (IV.24.53); Muṇḍas (ib.); Nāgas (IV.24.63); Niṣadas (I.13.36); Pariyātras (II.3.17); Pāradas (IV.3.42-47); Pahlavas (IV.3.42); Pārasikas (II.3.17); Śakas (IV.24.52); Śūdras (II.3.16; IV.24.68); Turuṣkāras (IV.24.53); Vāhlikas (V.35.12); Vrātyas (IV.24.69).

(D) *Janapadas of Bhāratavarṣa*

Aṅga (IV.18.13-14); Ānartta (IV.1.64); Avanti (ib.); Aparānta (II.3.16); Bhauma (IV.24.65); Dakṣiṇāpatha (IV.2.14); Dāvikorvi (IV.24.69); Kaliṅga (III.7.9; IV.18.14; 24.65); Kāmarupa (II.3.15); Kamboja (IV.3.42); Kāśī (IV.13.116); Kāśmira (IV.24.69); Kekaya (IV.14.41, 42); Kośala (IV.24.59,64); Magadha (IV.23.1.ff; 24.63; 22.1.ff.); Mahiṣa (IV.24.65); Marubhū (IV.24.68); Madhya deśa (II.ch.3); Mithilā (IV.5.21.ff.); Muṣika (IV.24.67); Madra (II.3.17); Naimiṣāraṇya (III.14.18); Naimiṣaka (IV.24.66); Naiṣadha (IV.24.60, 66); Puṇḍra (II.3.16; IV.24.64); Pūrva deśa (II.3.15); Pānchāla (IV.19.59); Śālva (II.3.17); Saurāṣṭra(II.3.16; IV.16.68); Sauvira(II.3.17); Suhma (IV.18.13-14); Tāmralipta (IV.24.64); Uttarāpatha (IV.2.13); Vaṅga (IV.18.13-14); Vidarbha (IV.4.1; V.26.1); Videha (IV.5.21.ff.).

(E) *Towns of Bhāratavarṣa*

Avantipura (V.21.19); Avimukta (V.37.30); Ayodhyā (IV.4.97); Badarikāśrama (V.37.34); Bhojakaṭa (V.28.9); Champā (IV.8.19-20; 19.28); Dvārakā (V.23.13, 14); Gayā (III.16.4, 18); Gokula (V.3.17.ff.); Hastināpura (IV.19.28; V.35.30-31); Indraprastha (V.38.34); Kalāpa-grāma (IV.4.108-109; 24-118); Kāmpilya (IV.19.40); Kāśī (V.34.41-44); Kausāmbī (IV.21.6-8); Kuṇḍinapura (V.26.1.); Kurukṣetra (IV.19.76-77; VI.8.29); Kuśasthalī (IV.1.64); Madhuvana; Mahiṣmatī puri (IV.11.9, 19); Mathurā (I.12.2-4; V.8.31); Mṛttikāvara pura (IV.13.7); Padmāvati (IV.24.63); Piṇḍāraka Mahātirtha (V.37.6.ff.); Prabhāsa (V.21.25; 37.30, 38); Prayāga (IV.24.63; VI.8.29); Prāgjyotiṣa pura (V.29.8, 14, 16, 19): Pratiṣthāna (IV.1.16); Puṣkara (I.22.89; VI.8.29); Puruṣottama (I.15.22); Śālagrāma (II.1.24; II.13.4); Sambalagrāma (IV.24.98); Saravasti, Sonita pura (V.33.11); Videhapurī (IV.13.102.ff.); Vidisā III.18.64); Viranagara (II.15.6-7); Viśālapuri (IV.1.48-49); Varaṇāvata (IV.13.70, 72); Vrndāvana (V.6.24; 44).

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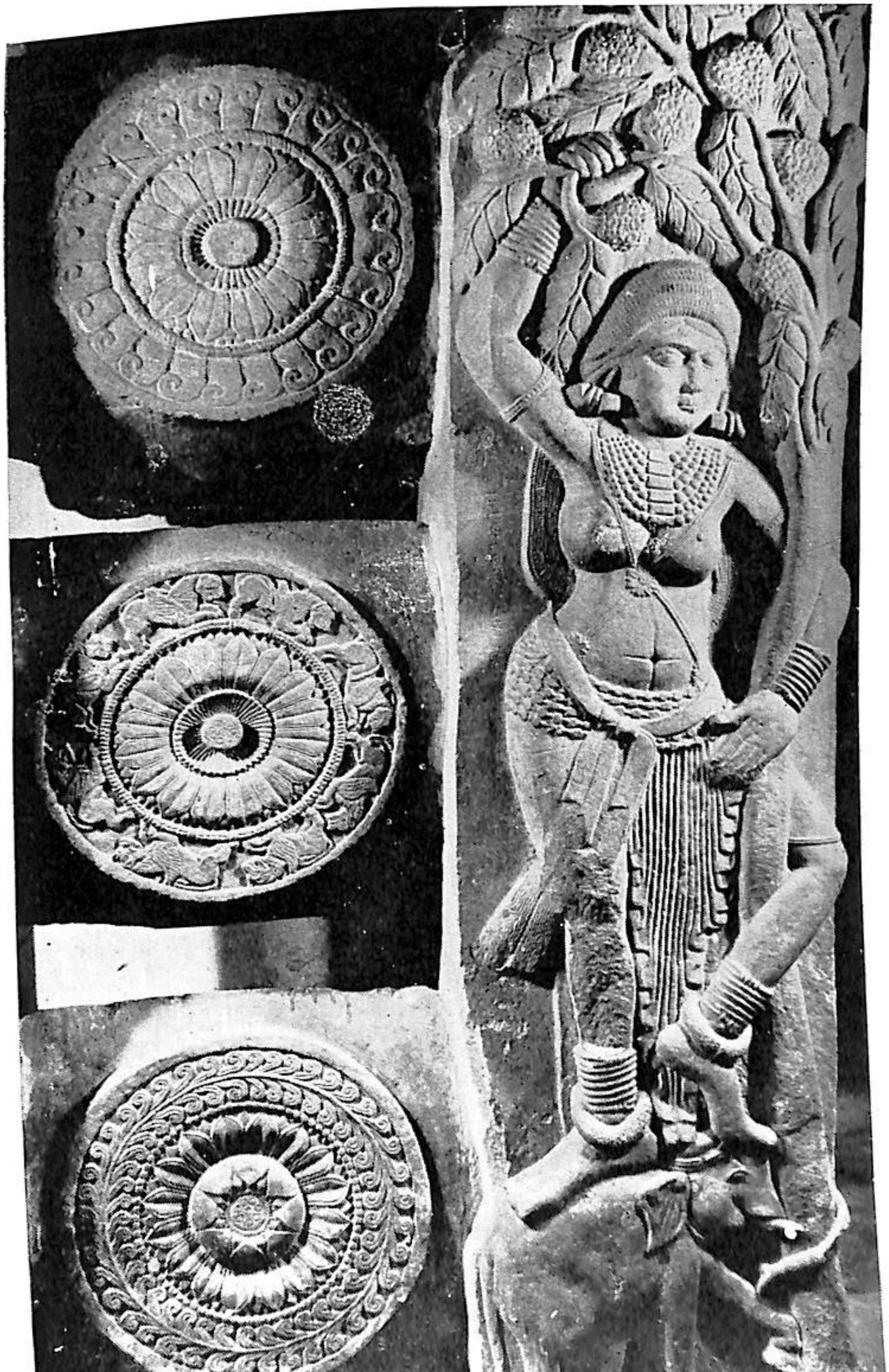
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1. Chulakoka Devatā Bharhut, Śuṅga Period



2. Devadhammā Sabhā, Bharhut, Śuṅga Period




3. Railing Pillar, Bharhut, Śuṅga Period



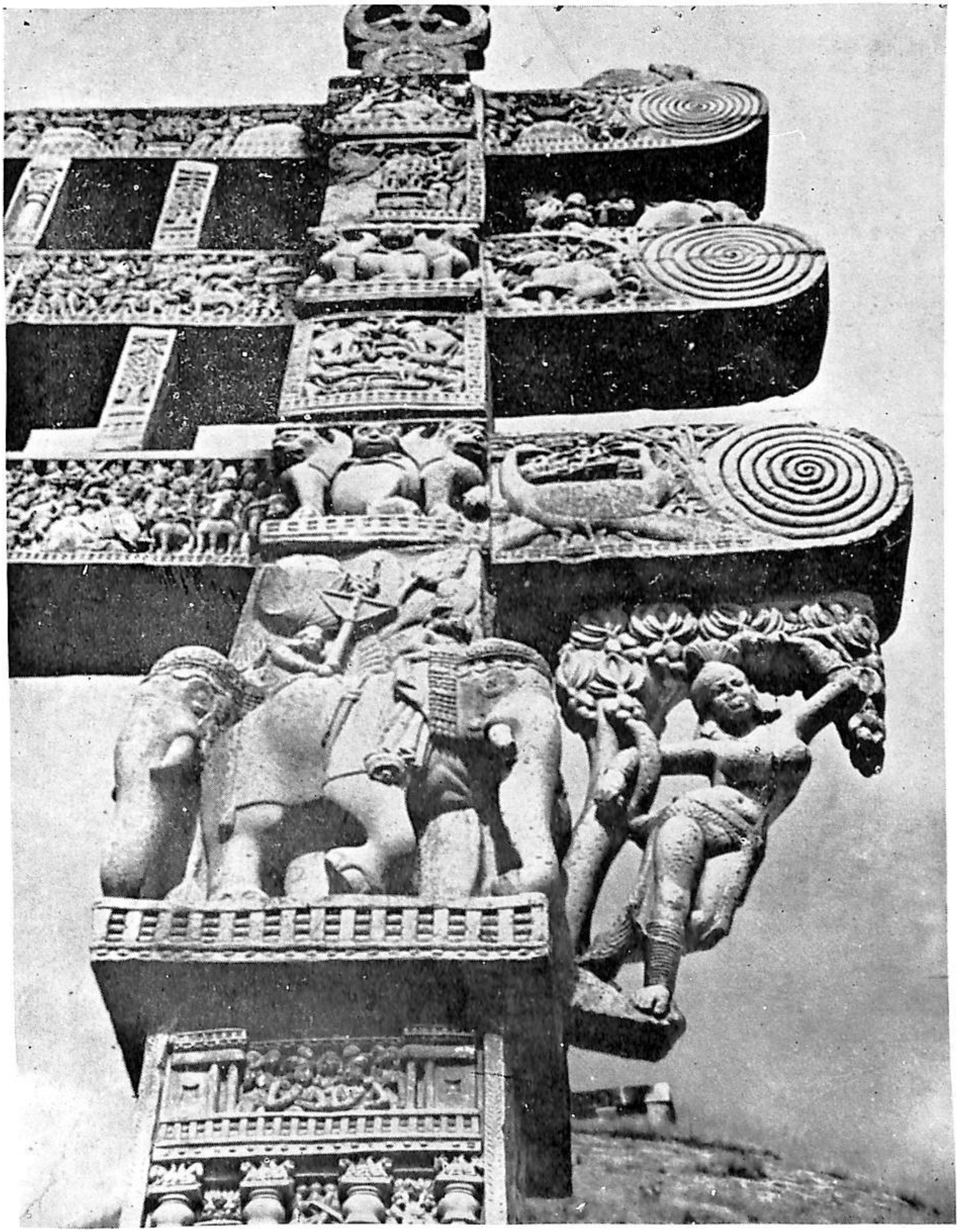
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5. Gaja-Lakṣmi, Bodhgaya, Śuṅga Period



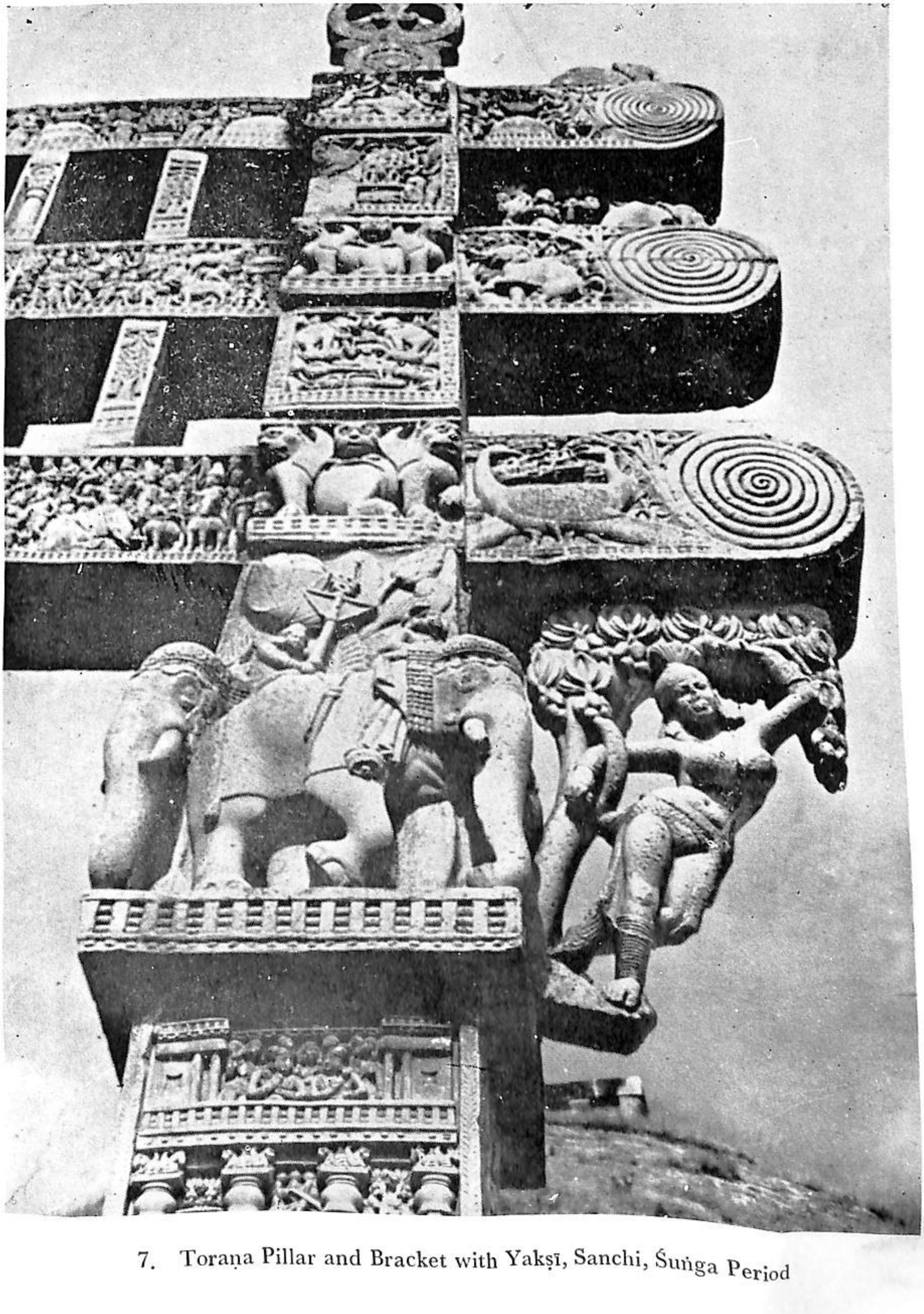
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7. Toraṇa Pillar and Bracket with Yakṣī, Sanchi, Śuṅga Period



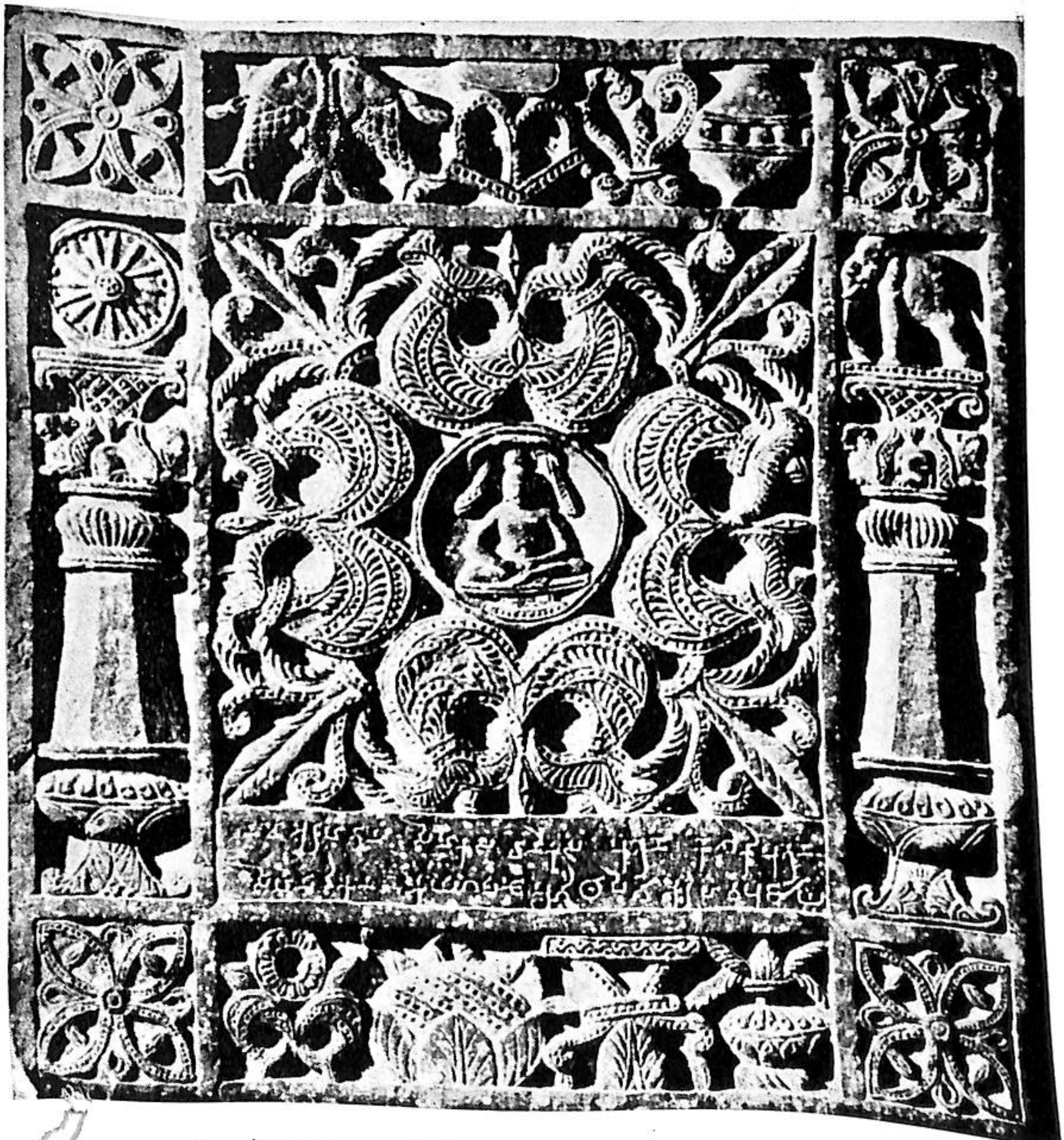
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10. Buddha, Mathura, Kuṣāṇa Period



11. Seated Bodhisattva Gāndhāra Kuṣāṇa Period




12. Buddha, Gāndhāra, Kuṣāṇa Period

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